



Perceptions of Byzantium and Its Neighbors (843–1261)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art Symposia

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Edited by
Olenka Z. Pevny

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART
YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS

*This publication is made possible by the
Mary C. and James W. Fosburgh Publications Fund.*

Published by The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
John P. O'Neill, Editor in Chief
Ellen Shultz, Editor
Elisa Frohlich, Production Manager
Minjee Cho, Electronic Publishing Assistant

Design implemented by Jo Ellen Ackerman,
of Bessas & Ackerman, based on a format
established by Tsang Seymour Design Inc.

The following images are reproduced from *The Glory of
Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era,
A.D. 843–1261* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum
of Art, 1997): pp. 3–6, 9, 11, 13, 14, 16, figs. 1–11; pp. 23,
31–33, figs. 1, 7–9; pp. 43, 45, 46, figs. 2–4; p. 69, fig. 9;
pp. 91, 95, figs. 7, 10; pp. 103, 104, 107, 108, 111, 113,
figs. 1–11; pp. 144–46, 148, figs. 6–8, 10.

Cover: Central plaque from the Crown of Constantine IX
Monomachos. See pp. 61, 63, figs. 1, 4

Frontispiece: The Ascension. Illumination from the
Homilies on the Life of the Virgin by James the Monk.
See p. 45, fig. 3

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Perceptions of Byzantium and Its Neighbors: 843–1261 /
edited by Olenka Z. Pevny.
p. cm.

Papers delivered at a symposium held May 23–25, 1997,
at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in conjunction with
the exhibition "The Glory of Byzantium."

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 0-87099-971-0 (pbk.)—0-300-08929-5 (Yale
University Press)

1. Art, Byzantine—Congresses. 2. Art, Byzantine—
Influence—Congresses. 3. Byzantine Empire—
Civilization—Public opinion—Congresses. I. Pevny,
Olenka Z. II. Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York,
N.Y.)

N6250.P47 2000
949.5'02—dc21

00-135005

Printed in Spain

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Foreword

Just as the influences of modern empires can be traced far beyond their borders by the hegemony of their artistic traditions, the art of the Byzantine Empire attests to the full range of its political and cultural power. The Metropolitan Museum of Art explored the first centuries of Byzantium in the 1977 exhibition "Age of Spirituality." The Museum's exhibition "The Glory of Byzantium," on view from March 11 to July 6, 1997, focused on the subsequent four centuries, which embraced the second great era of Byzantine culture (843–1261). To demonstrate the important role of Byzantium during this era, the exhibition and the accompanying catalogue examined four interrelated themes: the religious and secular cultures of the Byzantine Empire during its Second Golden Age, the empire's interactions with its Christian neighbors and rivals, its interaction with the Islamic East, and its contact with the Latin West. More than 360 objects were assembled to present a significant selection of the most outstanding works of art that survive from the empire and from most of the countries that constituted its extended sphere of influence. Not every country asked to participate was able to lend to the exhibition. Those missing from the greater Byzantine sphere were referred to in the exhibition's catalogue; however, the lack of works of art in the

exhibition representing their cultures—most especially, those of Serbia and of Nubia—was, and is, regretted.

The catalogue brought together the contributions of fifty-nine scholars and art historians, most of them working in America, to address the complex currents of Byzantine civilization. A historical overview of the period set the context for the study of its art and culture. Byzantium's religious and secular spheres, although closely intertwined, were highlighted separately in order to recognize the power and influence of its Church, still alive today, and of the state, now a memory. The religious sphere—in both its public and private domain—was always central and privileged in Byzantium.

Monumental reliefs, architectural elements, mosaics, and frescoes coming from many regions of the empire were used to define the interiors of Middle Byzantine churches. Chalices, patens, and religious manuscripts represented the liturgy of the Church in these key centuries of its independent development. The fact that the same religious images were popular among all classes of society was shown through works ranging from monumental wall decorations to delicate objects of personal veneration.

Religious subjects popularized during the era, such as the Anastasis (called in the West the Descent of Christ into Hell) and the Koimesis (called in the West the Dormition of the Virgin), took a variety of forms. Icons, of special importance in the centuries that directly followed the Iconoclastic controversy, were presented in all mediums, from grand panel paintings for public worship to intimate ivory plaques for personal use.

The power of the Byzantine court, as its armies gained and then lost vast territories, was demonstrated through imperial portraits of figures whose rigidly formal poses and elaborate robes of state reflected the confidence and wealth of the empire. Superbly worked secular objects displayed the standard of elegance for which Byzantium was widely envied. Byzantium's continuing interest in the arts and sciences of

Late Antiquity was shown through works that reflected the classical tradition.

To reveal the richly complex, multi-ethnic society of Byzantium and to counter the perception of the empire as a monolithic culture, the exhibition considered the extensive territory that came under Byzantine influence by acknowledging the cultural integrity of its many Christian neighbors. Byzantine objects known to have been in regions beyond the territorial borders of the empire during the Middle Byzantine centuries were included with items of local production in order to pinpoint the complexity of this cultural cross-fertilization. Many of these locally produced works of art repeated specific images and techniques familiar within the empire. The acceptance of Christianity by the Slavic peoples is arguably the most significant lasting achievement of the empire's Second Golden Age, and special emphasis was placed on objects from Bulgaria and Kyivan Rus' (now within the territories of Ukraine, Belarus', and the Russian Federation) to demonstrate the Slavs' conversion. The empire's relationship to other Christian peoples to the east and the south—the Georgians and Armenians and those Christians surviving in the former imperial territories lost to Islam—was shown through manuscripts, metalwork, and frescoes. Examples of the empire's interaction with the Crusader kingdoms established in Islamic territories introduced the complicated issue of Byzantine relations with the West.

Byzantine connections to the Islamic world were explored beginning with the Christian communities in Islamic lands. The role of the prestige of the imperial court in Constantinople in setting a standard emulated and rivaled by the great courts of the East was recognized, as was, in turn, the importance of the Islamic courts—the only royal houses with the wealth and power to inspire admiration and envy among the Byzantines. Artistic relations between Byzantium and specific Islamic states also recognized the empire's geographical position as a locus between the Islamic East and

the Latin West. The inclusion of Islamic works in the exhibition was meant to inspire further research on this relatively unexamined area of art history.

The exhibition also addressed the cultural exchange between the Latin West and Byzantium during the latter's Second Golden Age. Byzantine works of art known to have been in the West during these centuries were considered in juxtaposition with objects of local production that reflected their influence. The peaceful export of Byzantine culture as well as its forceful expropriation was presented. As in the Islamic section, cultural interaction was illustrated by the evidence of specific works. Attention was given to the long-established connections between Byzantine society and Italy, especially the south—which was nominally part of the empire for much of this period—and the Veneto.

Scandinavia's role in the spread of Byzantine culture was introduced. The extended contact between Byzantium and Germanic lands was exemplified by the inclusion of works of art linked to the Ottonian court, papal diplomacy, and Crusader loot. And the regions of the present-day countries of Hungary, France, England, and Spain also were shown to have had artistic contacts with the empire. Through this exploration of Middle Byzantine art and culture and its dialogue with its Christian neighbors, the Islamic East, and the Latin West, "The Glory of Byzantium" provided a comprehensive picture of the importance of the Second Golden Age of the empire in its own time and for centuries to come.

One of the leading Byzantine historians in America, Professor Speros Vryonis, Jr., honored the conceptualization of the exhibition for approaching "the art of Byzantium as a window through which to examine not only its guiding principles and rich variety of forms (and thus to grasp its essence), but also to see it as an expression of the complexity and intensity of Byzantium's relations to its neighbors (not only those forming a component part of Byzantine civilization, but also those

'belonging' to different civilizations, or to border regions between civilizations)."

The two-and-a-half day symposium that accompanied "The Glory of Byzantium" was intended to open that window further by attracting a diverse audience of scholars and non-specialists alike, and disseminating and exchanging information on several levels. For a general audience, the conference was aimed at providing an introduction to the rich culture of medieval Byzantium; for scholars, it offered a specialized view of the empire's traditions and its spheres of influence within several significant and specific contexts. We wish to thank the scholars—most from outside the United States—who presented the following papers on the concept of the exhibition and on the works assembled.

We wish to extend our special appreciation to the other outstanding specialists who, while not represented by the following papers, were instrumental in making the symposium a success. Most especially, we wish to thank David Buckton, then Keeper, Department of Medieval and Later Antiquities, British Museum, London; Jannic Durand, Conservateur, Département des Objets d'Art, Musée du Louvre, Paris; Dietrich Kötzsche, Curator Emeritus, The Medieval Collection, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kunstgewerbemuseum; and Thomas F. Mathews, John Langeloth Loeb Professor of the History of Art, The Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, for their participation in the discussion of the papers. We thank Olenka Z. Pevny, then Research Assistant for the exhibition and now editor of this volume, and Priscilla Soucek, Hagop Kevorkian Professor of Islamic Art and Architecture, The Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, for joining us in the introductions to the various sessions.

The staff of the Metropolitan Museum's Department of Education, under Kent Lydecker, Associate Director for Education, must be thanked for their efforts, which were instrumental in the successful organization and running of the event. Deborah Krohn, now teaching at the University of Maryland, was most generous in her support

of the project, as was Kristina Kaczmariski Sears, then her administrative assistant. Mikel Frank and the management staff of the Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium must be thanked for their efficient orchestration of the presentations, and Jessica Glass, Norman Proctor, and Robert Dickey for videotaping them.

We also wish to thank those who worked on "The Glory of Byzantium" exhibition and who also helped to make the symposium a success, in particular, Joseph D. Alchermes, Sarah Brooks, Jillian Cipriano, Xenia Geroulanos, Irina Kandarashva, Holger A. Klein, Jason Klein, and Louisa Leventis. In closing, it must be noted that it is only through the enthusiastic support of Philippe de Montebello, Director, that The Metropolitan Museum of Art is able not only to host symposia such as this one but to publish the papers that were presented—both activities highly relevant to the advancement of academic discourse.

The Museum extends its sincere thanks to the Mary C. and James W. Fosburgh Publications Fund for its support of this publication. We are also extremely grateful for the generous support from Alpha Banking Group, Citibank, and Papastratos S.A. for *The Glory of Byzantium* exhibition and its related programs. Additional assistance was received from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Foundation for Hellenic Culture, Marinopoulos Group, Halyvourgiki Inc., Constantine Angelopoulos and Mrs. Yeli Papayannopoulou, and anonymous donors. An indemnity was granted by the Federal Council on the Arts and Humanities.

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Preface

The thirteen papers in this volume were delivered at the international symposium held at The Metropolitan Museum of Art May 23–25, 1997, in the context of “The Glory of Byzantium” exhibition, which was on view from March 11 through July 6, 1997. One of the main purposes of this exhibition was to explore the Byzantine Empire’s complex and varied relationship with its neighbors, recognizing the multi-national, multi-ethnic, and multi-cultural character of its artistic traditions.

Whereas the symposium was conceived in close conjunction with the exhibition, its intent was somewhat different. It strove to acknowledge the international character and diversity of current scholarship on Byzantine art, and to present not only new material but also the variety of objectives, approaches, and methodologies that shape modern perceptions of the subject. Thus, the symposium was not restricted to a specific theme; instead, the participants were asked to address a broad range of aspects of the “Glory of Byzantium” exhibition. The contributors to this volume, all of whom are scholars of Byzantine art and culture, hail from ten different countries, including Austria, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, the Russian Federation, Ukraine, and the United States of America. They all hold prominent positions in the leading scholarly

or cultural institutions of their respective countries, and are distinguished experts in their fields of specialization, with established international reputations. Immediately apparent is that many of the authors are from Eastern Europe, and reside in lands that once were under the ecclesiastical and cultural sway of Byzantium. Yet, their perceptions of the Byzantine artistic legacy, which contributed to the cultural identity of their homelands, rarely are included in such English-language symposia and publications.

The volume begins with an introductory essay by Ihor Ševčenko, Dumbarton Oaks Professor of Byzantine History and Literature, Emeritus, at Harvard University, a leading Byzantine philologist, and also a specialist in Byzantine and post-Byzantine cultural history. In his essay, Professor Ševčenko discusses the importance of perceptions of Byzantium by outsiders as a field of study in its own right, and examines the perceptions of the empire held by its neighbors, by poets such as W. B. Yeats, J. Brodsky, and C. Cavafy, and by modern historians and professional Byzantinists.

The themes of the twelve papers that follow range from the production, attribution, or dating of Byzantine works of art to an attempt to explicate the complex relationship between Byzantine and indigenous cultures. Alice-Mary Talbot, who served as advisor for hagiographical projects and as Executive Editor of *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, and is currently Director of Byzantine Studies at Dumbarton Oaks, evaluates the role played by Byzantine monasteries in the creation and conservation of portable works of art, and compels us to consider how our perception of Byzantine art is shaped by the museum setting and our preconceptions regarding the medieval world.

The next two papers, by prominent curators from The State Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg, reconsider the dating of two Byzantine works of art carved in stone, and thereby call into question the conventional dating of other small-scale Byzantine carvings. Yuri Piatnitsky, Curator of the

Byzantine Icon Collection, is concerned with a now-lost *panagiaron* that once belonged to the Monastery of Saint Panteleemon on Mount Athos, while Vera N. Zalesskaya, Curator of Byzantine Applied Arts, studies a cameo with a mythological subject that is part of the Hermitage collection. These articles, as well as others in the volume, remind us once again of the crucial role that our perception of style continues to play in the study of Byzantine art.

The papers by Etele Kiss, Curator of Medieval Gold Work at the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum in Budapest, and Professor Thomas Steppan of the Institut für Kunstgeschichte der Leopold-Franzens-Universität in Innsbruck, focus on cloisonné enamels associated with the Byzantine court; their arguments raise implications about the way in which such works of art influenced the perception of Byzantium by outsiders. More specifically, Etele Kiss argues for the authenticity of the Crown of Constantine IX Monomachos, now in the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, while Thomas Steppan delves into the connections between Byzantine and Islamic courtly cultures through a detailed examination of the decorative and technical elements of the Artukid bowl in the Tiroler Landesmuseum in Innsbruck.

The following two papers discuss icons—an art form that more than all others determines our perception of Byzantine culture. Professor Liudmyla Milyaeva, a member of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, provides a thorough account of the condition and iconography of the Relief Icon of Saint George with Scenes from His Life, now in the Natsional'nyi muzei Ukrainy in Kyiv, in order to date the icon and understand its place in the evolution of the imagery of Saint George and the development of his cult in the Crimea and in Kyiv. Professor Elka Bakalova of the Institute of Art Studies of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences has selected some of the earliest and most interesting icons from Bulgaria as the topic of her paper. On the basis of such criteria as historical evidence, inscriptions, and

style, the author dates the icons and interprets their iconography and function.

The final five papers tackle the intricate problem of the interaction between Byzantine artistic developments and regional indigenous culture, and contribute to our understanding of how different peoples perceived and appropriated Byzantine art and architectural forms. Professor Guglielmo Cavallo of Rome University “La Sapienza,” a specialist in Greek paleography and a member of the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei and the Accademia delle Scienze of Turin, investigates the cultural interaction between Byzantium and southern Italy as revealed primarily in the local production of Greek manuscripts. He identifies their characteristic features and outlines their transformation in response to various factors, including the influence of Latin manuscripts. The following two papers focus on architectural topics. Panayotis L. Vocotopoulos, Professor Emeritus of Byzantine Art and Archaeology at the University of Athens and a member of the Academy of Athens, traces the development of an architectural school in Greece that was quite independent of Constantinople, between the eighth and the early thirteenth century. Professor Włodzimierz Godlewski of Warsaw University, an authority on Mediterranean Archaeology and Egyptology and former Director General of the National Museum in Warsaw, assesses the interplay between Byzantine and indigenous features in the architecture and painting of medieval Nubia and Coptic Egypt. The last two papers, contributed by the Georgian Professors Nodar Lomouri, head of the Byzantine Department at the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Georgian Academy of Sciences and Director of the Georgian State Art Museum, and Kitty Matchabeli, head of the Department of Minor Arts at the Chubinashvili Institute of Georgian Art, center on Georgian-Byzantine relations. Professor Lomouri provides a general introduction to the topic, while Professor Matchabeli reviews the implications for art of the relationship between the two states.

I feel obligated to the reader to clarify the principles that guided the editorial intervention that was deemed necessary for the production of this volume. The names of the contributors and the titles of their papers suffice to reveal the great diversity of their subjects, fields of interest, and methods. In fact, most of the papers (translated into English) were edited for style and clarity, and annotated; technical terms were glossed, dates provided for historical individuals, and bibliography, citations, and illustrations were added where necessary. An effort was made to standardize references and systematize the rules of transliteration that were employed for the dozen or so languages cited in these pages. For this purpose I consulted the reference works and encyclopedias—too many to list here—that are considered standard in each field of research. In most cases, place names are given in accordance with the official language of the state that currently contains them, as are the names of historical individuals directly associated with specific sites. Despite the appearance of homogeneity that has thereby been imposed upon the papers, the editorial process has not altered their actual content, and it is my hope that even stylistic nuances have been preserved. Ultimately, the authors remain entirely responsible for the opinions expressed and the degree of documentation that is offered in support of their arguments.

As the editor of this volume, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the authors themselves, who graciously cooperated in

the preparation of their texts for publication. For the opportunity to work on this publication, as well as on the “The Glory of Byzantium” exhibition, I wish to express my deep appreciation to Philippe de Montebello, Director; Mahrugh Tarapor, Associate Director for Exhibitions; John P. O’Neill, Editor in Chief and General Manager of Publications; and, in the Department of Medieval Art and The Cloisters, to William D. Wixom, Curator Emeritus; Helen C. Evans, Curator of Byzantine and Early Christian Art; and Peter Barnet, Michel David-Weill Curator in Charge. In the Editorial Department I am grateful to Susan Chun, Senior Editor for New Media and Special Projects, for her advice and support during this project; to Ellen Shultz, Editor, who must be warmly thanked for her professional expertise and patience during the final editorial stages; and, for the production of the volume, to Peter Antony, Chief Production Manager; Elisa Frohlich, Production Manager; Minjee Cho, Electronic Publishing Assistant; and Jo Ellen Ackerman, Designer with Bessas and Ackerman. A special debt of gratitude is extended to my colleagues and friends Anthony Kaldellis, Jurij Bilyk, Steve Rapp, and Sarah Brooks for helping me resolve many issues of transliteration as well as numerous scholarly and editorial queries.

Olenka Z. Pevny
Editor

The Metropolitan Museum of Art Symposia

Perceptions of Byzantium and Its Neighbors (843–1261)

Perceptions of Byzantium^I

I

When we hear a phrase like “Perceptions of Byzantium,” what first comes to mind are perceptions that prevailed at the time of Byzantium’s existence, and, primarily, the ways in which Byzantium’s neighbors viewed that empire during the thousand years of its existence. Evidence is plentiful, and derives from many quarters. It ranges from expressions of admiration for Constantinople’s splendor and opulence to slander heaped upon the Byzantines to justify a neighbor’s rapaciousness and hostile designs against the empire, with mistrust of the clever Greeks or manifestations of a foreign visitor’s inferiority complex thrown in for good measure. Thus, according to an early-twelfth-century chronicle compiled in Kyiv, the Rus’ ambassadors, who, in the late tenth century, attended services in Constantinople’s great church of Hagia Sophia, did not know—so they said—whether they were in heaven or on earth; deeply impressed, they reported back to their prince on the superiority of the Byzantine religion.² The prince adopted Christianity from Constantinople forthwith and, as the Ostromir Lectionary shows (fig. 1), seventy years later his realm was producing miniatures similar in quality to those that originated in the Byzantine capital. However, the same Kyivan chronicle relates how, before the Christianization of the land, the princess of the Rus’, Ol’ga [d. 969], deftly refused the

marriage proposal proffered to her by none other than Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos himself, the tenth-century emperor whose portrait appears on an ivory plaque (fig. 2) as well as on a coin (fig. 3) that were included in the exhibition.³ No matter that Constantine had been married for about twenty-five years at the time of the alleged proposal; the point was made: The great Byzantium coveted us, but we rejected its advances. Later on, in describing a cunning message from the Byzantines in the late tenth century, the fifteenth-century illuminated version of the chronicle concluded that “the Greeks are deceitful unto this very day.”⁴

In the second half of the tenth century, Liutprand of Cremona (about 920–972), the envoy of a Western king to Constantinople, told his readers how unimpressed he had been with the roaring lions and singing mechanical birds at the imperial palace, for he had ascertained beforehand how these tricks worked.⁵ Still, Byzantium must have been impressive enough to Liutprand’s later Western master Emperor Otto I (r. 962–73), for it was that emperor’s goal to obtain the hand of a Byzantine princess for his son, the future Otto II. The plan ultimately succeeded and in the Musée de Cluny in Paris we can still view an ivory celebrating that marriage (fig. 4).

Latin chroniclers of the Second and the Fourth Crusade—that is, authors describing the events of the mid-twelfth and early thirteenth centuries—showed admiration for the palaces, ceremonials, and refined manners of the Byzantine court presided over by Emperor Manuel I Komnenos (r. 1143–80) in about 1147. They beheld with awe the splendor “and great wealth” of Constantinople, “for never”—in the words of one writer—“was there a city that possessed so much.”⁶ The inhabitants of this glorious city, however, were suspected of surpassing others not only



Figure 1. The Ostromir Lectionary. Kyivan Rus', 1056–57. Tempera and gold on vellum: 35 x 30 cm. Russian National Library, Saint Petersburg (Fn. I.5)



Figure 2. Plaque, with Christ Crowning Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos. Byzantine, mid-10th century. Ivory: 18.6 x 9.5 cm. State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow (II 2 b 329)

in wealth but also in vice by another chronicler, who, moreover, mistrusted and greatly disliked Manuel I.⁷ In the first half of the fourteenth century, armchair strategists such as the Dominican Guillaume d'Adam linked plans for reconquering the Holy Land, again overrun by the pagans, with the necessity of first conquering Byzantium—a country inhabited by wily, effeminate, lying, and unreliable Greeks.⁸

The Arab sources tell a similar story, in spite of the ideological abyss dividing Islam from Orthodox Christianity. On the one hand, the Byzantines (al-Rūm) were beautiful, blond, and white skinned. They were superb architects—we are told that the Great Mosque of Damascus was built in the eighth century by twelve thousand craftsmen sent to the Umayyad caliph by the Byzantine emperor—and the mosaicists of the Great Mosque at Cordoba in Spain came, in fact, from “great Constantinople.” Byzantines were marvelous painters, capable of depicting the different ages of man, and various human emotions, and in the libraries of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople—a monument repeatedly described with admiration—one could find “all the sciences.” The Byzantine Empire was vast, extending from Constantinople to Barcelona in the West: Constantinople, with its splendid palaces and churches, was so extraordinary that “nothing was ever built like it, neither before, nor after”—echoing similar exclamations by the just-quoted Westerner, Geoffroi de Villehardouin—and even to eyewitnesses of the late thirteenth century, the city appeared “healthy, wealthy, and powerful.”

On the other hand, according to earlier Arabic accounts, the same Constantinople was, along with Rome, one of the four cities of Hell, and the Byzantines, including the women, were lax in their sexual morals and treacherous.⁹ In Arabic, Rus', and Western sources, the “Other,” impressive as he may have been, was not to be trusted.

Evidence for Byzantine *self*-perceptions is plentiful as well. Some of these judgments

were formulated as a reaction to external threats, but most of them derived from traditional—that is, originally pagan—imperial ideology, combined with scriptural notions about the End of All Things and the Second Coming. The Byzantines presented themselves as meek and not at all arrogant, but surely superior in culture to all their neighbors; they expected their empire to endure forever, until the Day of the Last Judgment. The splendid objects in “The Glory of Byzantium” exhibition help us understand how the Byzantine elite of the glorious ninth through thirteenth centuries, for whom these works were produced, could have entertained such notions.

Only in the last century and a half of Byzantium’s existence—well beyond the time span covered by the exhibition—did Byzantine intellectuals, faced with the West’s material and cultural efflorescence and with the reality of Turkish advances, begin to doubt the validity of their world view. They questioned the eternity of any empire, showed ambivalence concerning Byzantine cultural superiority, and even wondered about the superiority of the Orthodox religion. As for pinpointing the causes of their empire’s sorry state, these intellectuals were not able to go beyond blaming the sinful ways of their compatriots.¹⁰

All these topics have been brilliantly researched and presented by scholars over the last sixty years or so, and have become common knowledge, at least among Byzantinists. Thus, I shall be excused for not dwelling any further on perceptions of Byzantium by its contemporaries. I shall only suggest one further approach to the topic of perceptions held by the Byzantines, for such an approach, so far as I know, has not attracted much attention. I have in mind the Byzantines’ perception of what was important for themselves in their own world. I shall draw my example from the exhibition and discuss the thirteenth-century Byzantine reliquary, now in the Moscow Kremlin, which is significant both as a work of art and as an object for worship.



Figure 3. Solidus of Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos. Byzantine, 945. Gold: Diameter, 19 mm; weight, 4.41 gm. The American Numismatic Society, New York (1977.158.1095)

On one side, the reliquary shows the Anastasis (fig. 5); on the other, it displays an inscription in Greek of the same size and careful execution (fig. 6). The inscription, in eight correct dodecasyllabic verses, describes, one by one, the relics contained in the object. The saints who provided the relics are sometimes identified by scriptural allusions: Thus, in the third line “Twin” replaces “Apostle Thomas” and “Lamp” “John the Baptist.” According to the inscription, the contents of the reliquary were as follows:

+ Tunic, Mantle, Towel, Garment of the Word;
Shroud, Blood, Crown of Thorns;
Bone, Wood, Hair—of Apostle Thomas, of the Cross, of John the Baptist;
Segment of the All-chaste Girdle, part of the Virgin’s Mantle;
Relic of E[ustra]tios; Bone of John the Baptist;
Hair of Euphemia; Relic of Nicholas;
Bones of Stephen the Younger, of Theodore, and of Panteleemon; three from the three.

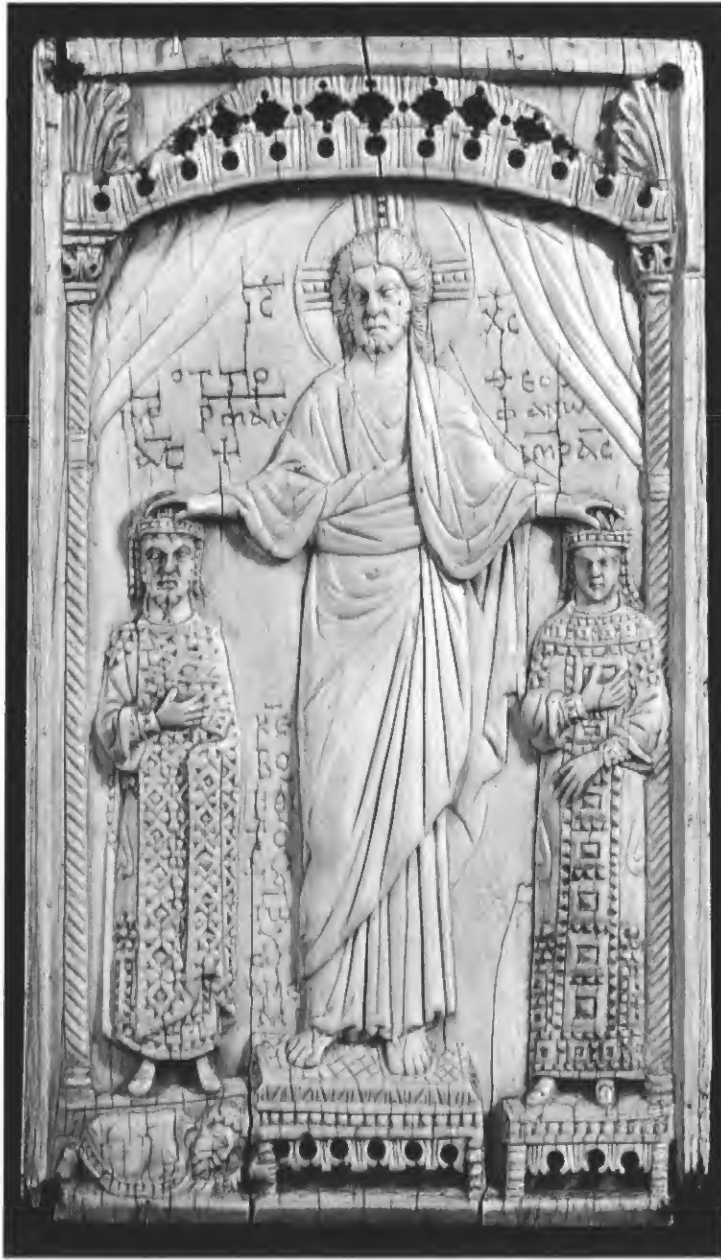


Figure 4. Christ Blessing Emperor Otto II and Empress Theophano. South Italian(?), 982/83. Ivory, with traces of red polychromy: 18.6 x 10.8 cm. Musée National du Moyen Âge et des Thermes de l'Hôtel de Cluny, Paris (Cl. 392)

From these verses we may deduce the obvious: Since the protective and miraculous power of the relics was what mattered most to the wearer, it was as crucial to have them enumerated one by one as to have Christ's Anastasis depicted on the reliquary. Quite different is the *modern* perception of what is important about the reliquary—and that is what determined the contents of the relevant entry in the exhibition catalogue. The entry describes the Anastasis and offers abundant information on the techniques of the inlay's execution, but does not translate the verses and says next to nothing about the reliquary's contents. To the modern student, the reliquary is an art object rather than an article of worship.¹¹

II

So much for the Byzantines themselves and their contemporaries. The remaining part of my paper will deal with us—the moderns: poets, political ideologues, and professional Byzantinists. I shall use a personal reminiscence as a bridge for what is to come.

My teaching career began when I was in my late twenties. My title then was lecturer in Byzantine history; the time, about 1950; and the place, Berkeley, California. As a fresh arrival from the French-speaking part of Europe, I was warmly received, and wined and dined all around by the local culturally—but not Byzantinologically—sophisticated families. One moment of repeated embarrassment stands out in my memory of those evenings. After the polite question about what my field was, and the answer that I was a Byzantinist, my interlocutor would exclaim: "Oh, Yeats's 'Sailing to Byzantium'; what a wonderful poem; what do you think of it?" The fact was, I thought nothing of it, and that for the simple reason that I had never heard of it before. In self-defense, I did quickly seek out "Sailing to Byzantium," having first ascertained that the poem had been written in 1927 by William Butler Yeats, a politically *engagé* Irish author of the English

tongue, four years after he had received the Nobel Prize for literature.

The first time I read the poem I did not understand the point of its beginning or its reference to the “monuments of unaging intellect”—presumably, good things connected with Byzantium—but I did get the gist of parts of the second and third, and most of the fourth, and last, stanzas. I quote:

And therefore I have sailed the seas and come
To the holy city of Byzantium.

III

O sages standing in God's holy fire
As in the gold mosaic of a wall,
Come from the holy fire . . . and gather me
Into the artifice of eternity.

IV

Once out of nature I shall never take
My bodily form from any natural thing,
But such a form as Grecian goldsmiths make
Of hammered gold and gold enamelling
To keep a drowsy Emperor awake;
Or set upon a golden bough to sing
To lords and ladies of Byzantium
Of what is past, or passing, or to come.¹²

After some thought, I decided that the poem was not primarily about Byzantium but about something else, about being young and being old, and about nature and artifice. Hence, as a Byzantinist, I did not have to deal with it. Besides, I had objections: Byzantium (as opposed to Constantinople) was not a “holy city,” but a pagan one; “Grecian goldsmiths” seemed inappropriate, because, I knew, Byzantines were people of many ethnicities; “lords and ladies of Byzantium” sounded too Western Medieval to my ear. When it came to the bird or birds “set” by the craftsmen “upon a golden bough to sing,” and to “keep a drowsy Emperor awake,” I understood the allusion, for, like any good student, I remembered the well-known passage from the report by our acquaintance Liutprand: “Before the Emperor's seat stood a

tree, made of bronze gilded over, whose branches were filled with birds, also made of gilded bronze, which uttered different cries, each according to its varying species.”¹³

In short, I was satisfied. For some years afterward, I would parry the ritual dinner question about Yeats with the intimidating answer that the poem had little to do with Byzantium. Such was, and probably still is, the arrogance of youth: arrogance and naïveté. For I did not realize that along with Byzantium itself—the goal of my quest—perceptions of Byzantium are a legitimate, and, for the professional, an indispensable field of study; nor did I recognize that perceptions by outsiders concerning Byzantium could amount to valid, shorthand statements. Certainly, Yeats's lines about the “form” made by “Grecian goldsmiths,” “of hammered gold and, gold enamelling,” rang true to every visitor to “The Glory of Byzantium” exhibition and to every beholder of the cover to that exhibition's catalogue.

A writer's perceptions are composed of the air that he breathes—the more pretentious term for which is *Zeitgeist*—the things that he sees, and the texts that he reads. An army of literary critics ferreted out Yeats's relevant reading, such as Edward Gibbon's eighteenth-century classical work, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (of course), and *The Cambridge Mediaeval History* (purchased by Yeats with Nobel Prize money), both declared the most likely basis for his information on the singing birds in the “Royal Palace of Byzantium.” Among Yeats's other sources were a book by W. G. Holmes, *The Age of Justinian and Theodora*,¹⁴ from which Yeats derived some realia for his other poem, “Byzantium,” and O. M. Dalton's *Byzantine Art and Archaeology* (an excellent no-nonsense work known to some present-day art historians from their student days).¹⁵ The same critics connected the “sages standing in God's holy fire/As in the gold mosaic of a wall” with the Byzantine mosaics that had impressed Yeats either during his visit in 1907 to Ravenna, with its

Sant'Apollinare Nuovo and its Baptistry of the Orthodox, or his journey of 1924 to Sicily, where he saw the mosaics of Cefalù, Monreale, and the Cappella Palatina.

By putting together several of Yeats's prose utterances about Byzantium, the critics plausibly showed that he had set both of his Byzantine poems in the period between 550 and 1000, and reminded us of the remark Yeats made in 1938—a year or so before his death—to the effect that if he had had his choice of staying somewhere in antiquity for a month, he would have chosen the Byzantium of Justinian's time, so he could have learned the answers to all his questions about the supernatural from “some philosophical worker in mosaic.” So much for the critics.¹⁶

We, the readers interested in Yeats's perception of Byzantium, can only wonder where he would have found a philosophically minded mosaic worker in sixth-century Constantinople. We should note that Yeats turned to the Byzantine Empire when he decided to face the problem of old age: He was over sixty when he wrote “Sailing.” The Byzantinists among us will be tempted to quote a passage from the twelfth-century chronicler who exuberantly proclaimed the *youth* of the Constantinople of his time—the New Rome—as opposed to the wrinkled Old Rome on the Tiber.¹⁷ We also must observe that in one of the preliminary versions of his poem, Yeats wished to be carried “toward that great Byzantium . . . where nothing changes”¹⁸—to which we will hear a murmur of dissent from professional Byzantinists who for years have been declaring loudly that Byzantium was changing all the time. On the other hand, those of us who are friends of Byzantium will acknowledge with pleasure that when Yeats commented on his “own poetry” on the BBC, and explained the poem's Byzantine bird, he said that he had used “it as a symbol of the intellectual joy of eternity.” Finally, we will remember that his two poems, “Sailing to Byzantium” and “Byzantium”—a somewhat longer text, which shall not be discussed here—works

that occupy a central position in English poetry of the twentieth century, used Byzantium as their setting.

Yeats was a Nobel Prize Laureate.

Another Nobel Prize Laureate, the recently deceased Joseph Brodsky, wrote in both Russian and English. In 1985, Brodsky published a lengthy essay of his impressions of a trip he had made to Istanbul. The English version of the essay bears the title “Flight *from* Byzantium”—a transparent allusion to Yeats's poem—standing “Sailing *to* Byzantium” on its head, as it were. Nowhere is Yeats mentioned in Brodsky's text, but there are plausible hints, in addition to the essay's English title, that Brodsky or his English collaborator knew not only “Sailing” itself but also the critical literature about it.¹⁹

Beyond that, Yeats's and Brodsky's Byzantiums have nothing to do with each other. Brodsky did not like Byzantium. He exhibited a neophyte's partiality for the Rome of the West and for western values. Nor did Brodsky like the Turks or the dust of Istanbul. He calls the Ottoman Empire “Turkish Byzantium.” The Covered Bazaar in Istanbul reminds him of an Orthodox church. He finds Istanbul's mosques ugly, and compares them to enormous toads in frozen stone, only to tell us next that these mosques were modeled on Hagia Sophia, which, he informs us, was a Sasanid—that is, a Persian—creation. Manifestations of Byzantine culture are for Brodsky the result of the inferiority complex of that place. He also blames the East—Byzantium—for displaying not the least semblance of democracy.

If I limit my discussion of Brodsky here, it is not because of his views and images, to which he is entitled as a poet—views whose roots can be found in the nineteenth-century Russian quarrels between the pro-Byzantine Slavophiles and the anti-Byzantine Westernizers. It is because the plethora of factual errors in Brodsky's essay undermines its validity. He mixes up the fifth-century Theodosian wall of Constantinople with the no-longer-extant fourth-century Constan-



Figure 5. Reliquary, with the Anastasis (obverse). Byzantine, 13th century(?). Gold, cloisonné enamel, silver, and niello, with silver mount: 9.5 x 8.5 cm. State Historical and Cultural Museum “Moscow Kremlin” (M3 1147)

Figure 6. Reliquary, with the Anastasis (reverse), showing the inscription

tinian wall; he thinks that the Galata bridge crosses the Bosphorus rather than the Golden Horn; he says that the Byzantine eleventh-century polymath Michael Psellos (1018–after 1081) wrote his *History* during the reign of an emperor who died when Psellos was eight years old; and on his brief visit to Hagia Sophia, Brodsky looked up and saw “mosaics” representing “either kings or saints.” Medieval Russian pilgrims to Constantinople have left us more reliable testimony.

The “Flight from Byzantium” of 1985 was first published in *The New Yorker*. A Byzantinist therefore conjures up the image of thousands of affluent baby boomers

absorbing their views of Byzantium from that text, along with their Boursin and Chardonnay, or even their Chablis *premier cru*. Perhaps, by way of rehabilitation, these same thousands visited “The Glory of Byzantium.” In any case, one is consoled by the thought that Joseph Brodsky received the Nobel Prize for his poetry, not for his prose.

The third and last poet whose perceptions of Byzantium I shall present here wrote in Greek. His name is Constantine Cavafy; he died in 1933 at the age of exactly seventy, and was thus Yeats’s close contemporary. This resident of Egyptian Alexandria, for thirty years an official of the Ministry of Public Works and of the Stock Exchange, was no

Nobel Prize Laureate. He was little known in the Greek world outside the circle of his Alexandrian admirers until he was close to forty, and remained unknown to the foreign, mostly English, public until he was fifty-six. Today, along with T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, and Yeats, he counts among the great poets of the first half of the twentieth century.

Cavafy's poetic output is exiguous. Still, a dozen of his poems—including the best-known one, "Waiting for the Barbarians"—deal with Byzantium as he defined it, and four of them are about personalities of the Komnenian period, when many of the centerpieces of the "Glory of Byzantium" exhibition were produced.

The foreign reader familiar with Greek is attracted to Cavafy's poetry on account of his simple style and accessible vocabulary, consisting of a mixture of learned and popular expressions. The Byzantinist, even the non-Greek-speaking one, savors Cavafy's ability to take stock of the intricacies of a given moment in Byzantium's history, to compress them into a few lines of poetry, and to adopt the voice of a narrator who is but a minor piece on the historical chessboard, but from whose point of view an event is described.

All these points are well illustrated by a poem of 1921, close in time to "Sailing to Byzantium." Its references are datable to the last years of the eleventh century. Thus, the Botaneiates mentioned in the poem is Emperor Nikephoros III Botaneiates (r. 1078–81), and Irene Doukaina (r. 1081–1118) is the wife of Emperor Alexios I Komnenos (r. 1081–1118), who overthrew Botaneiates and thus brought about the ruin of many of that deposed emperor's courtiers:

"A Byzantine Nobleman in Exile
Composing Verses"

The frivolous can call me frivolous.
I've always been most punctilious about
important things. And I insist
that no one knows better than I do

the Holy Fathers, or the Scriptures, or the
Canons of the Councils.

Whenever he was in doubt,
whenever he had any ecclesiastical problem,
Botaneiates consulted me, me first of all.
But exiled here (may she be cursed, that viper
Irimi Doukaina), and incredibly bored,
it's not altogether unfitting to amuse myself
writing six- and eight-line verses,
to amuse myself poeticizing myths
of Hermes and Apollo and Dionysos,
or the heroes of Thessaly and the

Peloponnese;
and to compose the most strict iambics,
such as—if you'll allow me to say so—
the literati of Constantinople don't know
how to compose.
It may be just this strictness that makes them
condemn me.²⁰

In a few lines, we have been given a lesson on the dangers lurking in a Byzantine courtier's career, shown the alloy of ecclesiastical and secular learning that a high official must possess, and have learned about our official's literary classicism, about his practice of the dodecasyllabic verse—used for so many inscriptions on objects in the "Glory of Byzantium" exhibition—and about the role of literary skills in the intrigues that prevailed in the higher administrative echelons of the court.

Cavafy was widely read in matters Byzantine: He annotated his copy of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*—notes that, as far as I know, remained unpublished as late as 1963. He read Charles Diehl's *Figures byzantines* of 1906,²¹ including Diehl's portraits of Byzantine women, where he could have found the inspiration for his poems about Emperor Alexios I Komnenos's daughter, Anna Komnene, and his mother, Anna Dalassene (about 1025–1100). Cavafy even published a review of that marvel of erudition dating from the closing years of the nineteenth century, Karl Krumbacher's pioneering *History of Byzantine Literature*.²² In this review, Cavafy sang the praises of what he



Figure 7. Emperor Nikephoros III Botaneiates and Courtiers. Illumination from the Homilies of Saint John Chrysostom. Byzantine, about 1071–81. Tempera and gold on vellum: 42.5 x 31 cm. Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris (Ms. Coislin 79, fol. 2r)

considered to have been medieval Greek literature.²³ On top of that, in contradistinction to Yeats and Brodsky, Cavafy had direct knowledge of Byzantine historians on whose information he could rely, in drawing his poetic vignettes: authors like Niketas Choniates (about 1155–1217), John Kinnamos (before 1143–after 1185), Nikephoros Gregoras (about 1290/1–1358/61), and John VI Kantakouzenos (r. 1347–54). Thus, critics have been able to track down many of the original sources of Cavafy's texts, although they have given us no concrete basis for the poem about Emperor Nikephoros Botaneiates' exiled courtier.²⁴ However, we may imagine that before his exile he looked like any of the four officials surrounding Emperor Nikephoros in the frontispiece miniature in the splendid Paris manuscript of John Chrysostom's Homilies (fig. 7).

In a sentence, Yeats saw Byzantium from outside, Cavafy from the inside, and Brodsky saw it hardly at all.

III

For all his cosmopolitan background, Cavafy viewed the Byzantine Empire as a Greek entity. In a poem written in 1925, he called it τὸ κράτος μας—our state—and on an earlier occasion, in a description of a “Greek” church service, his mind turned to “the honor of our race, our glorious Byzantinism.” This identification of Byzantium with Greece, Byzantine poetry with medieval Greek poetry, and Byzantine history with medieval Greek history, has its own historical, mostly romantic, roots. For some seven hundred years, the Byzantine elite conceived of their state as a continuation of the Roman Empire, and modern scholars have observed how little interest in, and knowledge of, classical Greece is to be found in Byzantine popular chronicles. Not until the twelfth century—and more so later on—when Byzantium was no longer a multinational but mostly a Greek-speaking state, did its secular elite, joined by a few among its ecclesiastical mem-

bers, fall back on ancient Hellenic values in terms of historical heritage, and feel that continuity existed between themselves and the Hellenes of old.²⁵

In liberated Greece, after 1821, the question of periodization of Greek history was at first a moot one. One could write a history of free Greece, in which case it would end in 146 B.C. with the Roman conquest and would not resume again until 1821. The intervening years were marked by either Roman or Turkish domination or a long unclassical Christian rule, the spirit of which did not appeal to such champions of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment as the Parisian émigré Adamantios Korais or to their Greek epigones. A change occurred in the forties of the nineteenth century, and was brilliantly formulated by the “historian of the Greek Nation,” Konstantinos Paparregopoulos in the 1850s. Paparregopoulos divided Greek history into five periods, the third of which, from 476 to 1453, coincided with the freedom of the Hellenic nation.²⁶ Byzantium was a Greek state centered in Constantinople, and the (not always directly stated) objective was to restore that state, usurped by the Turks. Cavafy, an assiduous reader of Paparregopoulos, adopted his conception, as did others both in Greece and elsewhere. Today, many scholars consider medieval Greek history to be a definite part of Byzantine history, but they are less inclined, mostly by implication, to identify Byzantine history with the history of medieval Greece. They are aware, to be sure, that there always was the eventually triumphant Greek facet in the language—literary, sacred, and administrative—therefore, in the literature, liturgy, and laws of Byzantium, but they also are aware of the multinational character of the Early and, in part, Middle Byzantine Empire.

“The Glory of Byzantium” exhibition espoused this perspective, for it stressed the varying manifestations of Byzantine culture, and showed how Byzantine art often adopted indigenous forms over a vast territory. What is more, in the exhibition Byzantium was



Figure 8. Jesse and King David, Ancestors of Christ. Spanish, about 1190–1200. Fresco on plaster: each, 67 x 54 cm. Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Barcelona (MNAC/MAC 8670††)



Figure 9. Chalice of Abbot Suger of Saint-Denis. Egyptian, 2nd–1st century B.C.; French, 1137–40 (mounts). Sardonyx (cup) and silver gilt, adorned with filigree, semi-precious stones, pearls, glass insets, and opaque white-glass pearls (mounts): Height, 18.4 cm; diameter (upper rim), 12.4 cm and (base), 11.7 cm. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Widener Collection (1942.9.277 [C-1])



Figure 10. Chalice. Hessian or Middle Rhenish, about 1170–80. Silver, chased, chiseled, engraved, punched, and gilded: Height, 25 cm; diameter (cup), 18.5 cm. Domschatz des Katholischen Saint Petri-Domes zu Fritzlar, Hessen, Germany

presented as still part of a larger world that comprised Central and Western Europe; witness such objects as the frescoes of the ancestors of Christ, from Spain (fig. 8); the chalices, such as that of Abbot Suger, from Saint-Denis (fig. 9), and the one from Hessen, Germany (fig. 10); and the Stavelot Triptych from Belgium (fig. 11).

Professor Samuel Huntington's *The Clash of Civilizations*, published in 1996, has a different vision (fig. 12). This work, hailed as "seminal" and "dazzling in scope" by his fel-

low political scientists, including Henry Kissinger, traces new civilizational frontiers, identifies Europe with Western Christendom, and sets it in opposition to a presumably non-European Orthodox Christianity, combined with Islam. The standard-bearer of this Orthodox Christianity is not Byzantium but Russia, and Athens slumbers outside Huntington's Europe.²⁷ I wonder what the surviving organizers of the Athens 1964 exhibition entitled "Byzantine Art–European Art" will think of this new civilizational fault line.

Yeats, Cavafy, and even Brodsky relied on scholarly, if at times popularizing, literature when constructing their perceptions of Byzantium. Even Huntington quoted Arnold Toynbee's *Study of History* for the one positive remark he made about the Byzantine Empire.²⁸ It turns out that sometimes poetry, not to mention political science, depends on scholarship. The next question is: How do the scholarly popularizers and those who feed them information—that is, the professional Byzantinists, the first link in the intellectual food chain—form their perceptions of Byzantium?

The answer is that the modern Byzantine scholar's perception of the past, like anybody else's, is conditioned by the perception of one's present. This condition of being conditioned is inescapable, and it is the duty and the responsibility of the professional—and even aspiring—scholar to realize it, make peace with it, exploit it to his mission's advantage, and, insofar as is possible, to avoid its pitfalls. The responsibility is heavy, for much of the image of Byzantium that curious lay readers will carry in their minds ultimately will have been derived from the labors of professional Byzantinists.

To suggest how difficult it is, even on a simple level, to get at the past through the veil of perceptions of one's own time, I will go back to the early years of Byzantine studies. About 1700, Bernard de Montfaucon, the great Benedictine scholar and father of modern scholarship on Greek manuscripts, described a choice example (featured in "The Glory of Byzantium" exhibition; see fig. 7), providing a reproduction of its frontispiece miniature (fig. 13). He must have firmly believed that he had copied the original with utmost exactitude, but three centuries later, with the help of photography, we can see that what Montfaucon's engraver produced was a Late Baroque etching in accord with the conventions of his time, rather than a precise rendering of a

Byzantine miniature (compare figs. 7 and 13).²⁹ So much for the cautionary tale.

In the last part of my paper I shall review the evolving perceptions of Byzantium as they can be reconstructed by surveying roughly the last forty years of the Byzantinists' practice of their craft.³⁰

In times when the river of history is flowing slowly, change is perceived as a continuation of, and possibly an improvement on, things as they are. When the flow of history is rapid, however, changes are perceived as breaks with the past. The last forty years or so of Byzantine studies are a case in point. The changes that occurred in some areas of our discipline in these years have less to do with Byzantium and more, either in subtle or explicit ways, with the *Zeitgeist*. Of the three examples that follow, one involves the abandonment of an approach and the other two the birth of new ones.

The abandonment concerns a type of intellectual history that centers on the transference of concepts from one culture and epoch to another, especially in the study of the relationship between the divinity and the ruler—an approach exemplified by the works of the French art historian (of Russian origin) André Grabar and of Ernst Kantorowicz, the historian of ideas, who moved from Germany to the United States on the eve of World War II. Unless I am mistaken, this way of doing things in the Byzantine field found its last manifestation in Kantorowicz's famous article published in 1963, entitled "Oriens Augusti," after which date it largely disappeared from Byzantine studies.³¹

A number of explanations may be proffered for this state of affairs. Perhaps Kantorowicz's combination of technical equipment, competence in a number of fields, and broad culture is not readily encountered among today's practitioners of our trade. In addition, the rules of the scholarly game have changed, so that bold leaps of imagination from one set of well-established facts to another are no longer rewarded with



Figure 11. Stavelot Triptych. Mosan, about 1155–58 (framing elements and *champlevé*-enamel roundels) and Byzantine, about 1100 (*cloisonné* enamel). Gold, copper gilt, silver, enamel, *vernis brun*, and precious stones: 48.4 x 66 cm (open); center panel, 48 x 31.8 cm. The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York

applause. The high beam of historical research has been shifted by a later generation to different aspects of the past; moreover, this generation prefers to listen to, read, and be read by its coevals, and to look up to authorities in other fields rather than to the older masters in its own field.

The break with past ways of doing things has occurred mainly in Byzantine art

history, and above all in art history as practiced in the United States—a country where art historians make up the bulk of Byzantinists—and in England. Similar perceived breaks with the past, however, also can be observed in the study of the Saints' Lives and of other literature. The rule of the game is interpretation rather than discovery, and the questions asked are about the use and

function of art objects and about their social context—that is, about producers, patrons, and consumers. When it comes to the tools used by the new wave of art historians, I am pleased to report that the knowledge of Greek is more widespread than it used to be (even if it is not perfect) and the insistence on combining text and image is universal. Codicology, or the study of manuscripts as cultural artifacts for historical purposes, is put to heavy use, as is the technical analysis of the production of some classes of objects. All this leaves Kurt Weitzmann, the organizer of “The Age of Spirituality,” the 1977 predecessor of the “Byzantium” exhibition at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, far behind (so far, that one younger scholar even *defended* him on a minor point some years ago). I view this trend as marking the victory of common sense, rather than—as the practitioners of the new approach occasionally claim—as an application of “critical theory,” a somewhat ill-defined label imported from outside our discipline.

Another theoretical stance from outside, adopted, this time, by many students of Byzantine history and of literature, is to speak of “constructing” the past, whereas the old folks spoke of “reconstructing” it. I am afraid little is new in that new approach. The observation that in attempting to reconstruct the past we tend to construct it under the influence of our present, sometimes to the advantage of the task at hand, was made repeatedly in the nineteenth century (just remember Marx) as well as in the twentieth—notably, by the French medievalist Marc Bloch in the 1940s and by the historian of Byzantine literature Hans-Georg Beck in the 1970s. The problem is not that such a tendency exists—it does—but what to do with it. Should we be aware of it, control it, and constructively channel it? Or read into it a license to relax the historian’s self-discipline?

A sociologist of scholarship might connect the recourse to theory in our studies with such factors as the increase in the number of researchers, the practically stationary



Figure 12. Map of the Eastern Boundary of Western Civilization. From S. P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: 1996)



Figure 13. Emperor Nikephoros III Botaneiates and Courtiers. Etching, after the illumination from the Homilies of John Chrysostom. From Dom Bernard de Montfaucon, *Bibliotheca Coisliniana olim Segueriana* (Paris: 1715)

amount of “canonical” objects of study, and the decline in conventional, especially linguistic, research skills. Faced with the choice between remaining within the canon and interpreting it anew in the light of theories developed in other disciplines, on the one hand, and striking out into less researched areas such as unpublished texts, the post-Byzantine world, the history of the reception of Byzantium, or material and popular religious culture, on the other hand, intelligent young scholars are tempted to take the first course. They also may take it because it is easier and quicker to acquire the tenets of new theories than to turn to the time-consuming task of mastering the hitherto untreated material by conventional means.

The study of the women of Byzantium as agents of historical and cultural change—whether Latin princesses marrying into Byzantine ruling families or Greek patronesses of Greek manuscripts—rather than as silent objects of man-made history is one of the most visible new trends in our discipline. It is so much in the center of our awareness that I shall merely mention it here. Again, the subject is not new—without insisting on Charles Diehl’s *Figures byzantines* of 1906, I shall cite Spyridon Lampros’s still older *Greek Women Scribes and Women Manuscript Owners in the Middle Ages and during Turkocracy*, a work dating from 1902–3.³² However, the ideological difference is substantial: What was an antiquarian, or *cherchez la femme*, motivation in the past now aims to recover aspects of that past that, it is asserted, the historical establishment has hitherto neglected.

The engine that is pulling the innovative train of critical theory and women’s studies—and, to a somewhat lesser degree, of normal science—at least in the United States, is made up of a closely knit generation of scholars of both sexes already aged from forty-five to sixty. One should hope that, now that they have made their point, they will turn their attention to the generation under forty-five. After all, André Grabar and Ernst Kantorowicz, the two great

Byzantinists of the past, achieved fame through books written when they were in their late twenties and middle thirties.

If I had to draw the attention of young Byzantinists to one field popular today in scholarship at large, I would quote the *Rezeptionsgeschichte*. The old name for this was *Nachleben*, and in simple terms it means the study of how subsequent ages received, perceived, and reinterpreted a given epoch in all, or in some, of its manifestations. This approach fits the study of Byzantium as a well-made glove fits the hand; moreover, it calls for the exploration of still uncharted waters, such as—to give one example—the role that Byzantium’s image played in the culture of seventeenth-century Muscovy.

V

In 1996, I made the following pessimistic remarks at the opening of the World Congress of Byzantine Studies in Copenhagen: “In the widest scheme of things, the outlook for our discipline is not splendid, owing to the marginalization of conventional elite culture in the advanced Western countries. To the extent to which Byzantine studies are a part of that conventional elite culture, they, too, are being marginalized, and our efforts to spread the Byzantine message among the wider public may be an unconscious defensive reaction to this process.”³³

I still believe this statement to be valid in general, in 2000 even more than in 1996. It turned out, however, that I was far off the mark in one case: that of “The Glory of Byzantium” exhibition. Unconscious defensive reaction indeed! The organizers of the exhibition performed a miracle.³⁴ By exact count, four hundred thousand one hundred visitors saw “The Glory of Byzantium” before it closed in July 1997, a multitude equal to the whole population of Constantinople at the height of Byzantium’s might and four times the size of the empire’s armed forces during Justinian’s reign in the sixth century. These hundreds of thousands of

visitors—and those tens of thousands who purchased the exhibition's splendid catalogue—will keep the glory of Byzantium alive for a long time to come.

1. This is a slightly revised version of the lecture delivered at The Metropolitan Museum of Art on May 25, 1997, at the close of the symposium devoted to the exhibition "The Glory of Byzantium." The objects referred to in the text were included in the exhibition.
2. See *The Russian Primary Chronicle, Laurentian Text*, trans. and eds. Samuel H. Cross and Olgerd P. Sherbowitz-Wetzor (Cambridge, Mass.: The Mediaeval Academy of America, 1953), s.a. 987, p. 111.
3. *Ibid.*, s.a. 948–955, p. 82.
4. *Ibid.*, s.a. 971, p. 88. The passage is included only in the so-called Radziwill Chronicle. See, for example, *Lavrent'evskaia Letopis'*, 2nd ed., ed. E. F. Karskii, Polnoe sobranie russkikh letopisei, 1 (Leningrad [Saint Petersburg]: 1926), s.a. 971, col. 70.
5. See Liutprand, Bishop of Cremona, *The Embassy to Constantinople and Other Writings*, trans. F. A. Wright, ed. John Julius Norwich (London and Rutland, Vt.: J. M. Dent and Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1993), *Antapodosis*, book 6, ch. 5, p. 153.
6. See, for example, Geoffroi de Villehardouin, in *Memoirs of the Crusades*, trans. Sir Frank T. Marzials (New York: Dutton 1958), p. 48. In the original, the relevant words are "et les granz richesses que onques en nulle ville tant n'en ot." See Geoffroi de Villehardouin, *La Conquête de Constantinople*, 2nd ed., trans. and ed. Édmond Faral (Paris: 1961), vol. 1, p. 194 (= ch. 192).
7. See Odo of Deuil, Abbot of Saint-Denis, *De profectioe Ludovici VII in orientem / The Journey of Louis VII to the East*, trans. Virginia Gingerick Berry (New York: Columbia University Press, 1948), pp. 54–55; 64–65; 68–69; 76–77 sqq.
8. For d'Adam's tract to the French king see *Recueil des historiens des Croisades, documents arméniens*, vol. 2, ed. M. Ch. Kohler (Paris: Imprimerie royale, 1906), esp. pp. 440 sqq.
9. For Arab perceptions I relied on Nadja M. El Cheikh-Saliba's paper, "Byzantium through the Islamic Prism: 12th–13th Centuries," delivered at the 1997 Dumbarton Oaks symposium (forthcoming). See also the same author's Harvard Ph.D. dissertation, "Byzantium Viewed by the Arabs" (Harvard University, 1992), dealing with eighth- to eleventh-century sources.
10. See Ihor Ševčenko, "The Decline of Byzantium Seen through the Eyes of Its Intellectuals," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 15 (1961), pp. 169–86.
11. See Sarah Taft, "Pendant Icon with Anastasis" in *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, eds. Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), no. 115, pp. 166–67.
12. These excerpts are quoted from *The Variorum Edition of the Poems of W. B. Yeats*, eds. Peter Allt and Russell K. Alspach (New York: Macmillan, 1971), p. 408.
13. See note 5, above.
14. See William Gordon Holmes, *The Age of Justinian and Theodora, A History of the Sixth Century A.D.* (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1905–7).
15. See Ormonde Maddock Dalton, *Byzantine Art and Archaeology* (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1911).
16. The critics who provided material for the two previous paragraphs are too numerous to be quoted here. For a most succinct sample see Suheil B. Bushrui and Tim Prentki, *An International Companion to the Poetry of W. B. Yeats* (Gerrards Cross, England: Colin Smythe Ltd., 1989), pp. 162–63.
17. See Constantine Manasses, *Breviarium Historiae*, ed. Immanuel Bekker (Bonn: Ed. Weber, 1837), p. 102, verses 2349–51, p. 110, verses 2546–48.
18. See Jon Stallworthy, *Between the Lines, Yeats's Poetry in the Making* (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1963), p. 96.
19. For the Russian version of Brodsky's poem see *Sochineniia Iosifa Brodskogo*, vol. 4, ed. G. F. Komarov (Saint Petersburg: Kul'turno-prosvetitel'skoe ob-vo "Pushkinskii fond," 1995), p. 126–64; for the English version see Joseph Brodsky, *Less Than One, Selected Essays* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1986), pp. 393–446. Since the Russian original bears the neutral title "Journey to Istanbul," the title of the English version, "Flight from Byzantium," surely betrays Brodsky's awareness of Yeats. Incidentally, it is not clear whether "Flight" in the title means *fuga* or *volatus*. (Brodsky himself was a co-translator of the essay.)
20. See Constantine P. Cavafy, *Collected Poems*, ed. George Savidis (rev. ed., Princeton: Princeton University Press 1992), p. 110. Except for a word here and there, I reproduce the translation by Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard, which differs in many a detail from the edition of 1979 on p. 80. For the original version of *A Byzantine Nobleman* see Konstantinos P. Kavaphes [Constantine P. Cavafy], *Poimata*, 4th ed. (Athens: Ikaros, 1958), p. 118.
21. See Charles Diehl, *Figures byzantines* (Paris: A. Colin, 1906).
22. See Karl Krumbacher, *Geschichte des byzantinischen Litteratur von Justinian bis zum Ende des Oströmischen Reiches (527–1453)*, 2nd ed. (Munich: 1897).
23. See Konstantinos P. Kavaphes [Constantine P. Cavafy], *Peza*, ed. G. A. Papoutsakis (Athens: G. Phexis, 1963), pp. 43–50 (the 1892 review of Krumbacher's *History*); see esp. pp. 47–48 (on Cavafy's own annotated copy of Gibbon).
24. No source is given in B. Ph. Christides, *Ho Kavaphes kai to Byzantio* (Athens: 1958), pp. 64–66.
25. For the return to ancient Hellenic values see, for example, Apostolos E. Vakalopoulos, *Origins of the*

- Greek Nation; the Byzantine Period, 1204–1461* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1970), esp. chapters 2 and 3.
26. For the easiest access to Paparregopoulos's early concepts and system of periodization see his short *Historia tou hellenikou ethnous* (1853; reprint, Athens: Hermes E.P.E., 1970) with a good preface by Konstantinos Th. Demaras, esp. pp. 11, 28, 101 sqq. See also Konstantinos Th. Demaras, *Konstantinos Paparregopoulos: he epoche tou, he zoe tou, to ergo tou* (Athens: Morphotiko Hidryma Ethnikes Trapezes, 1986), esp. pp. 124–25 (on the difference, or lack thereof, between medieval Greek and Byzantine histories).
 27. See Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), esp. pp. 158–68.
 28. *Ibid.*, pp. 50, 327.
 29. See Dom Bernard de Montfaucon, *Bibliotheca Coisliniana olim Segueriana* (Paris: 1715), p. 136.
 30. What follows here until the end of Section IV derives from the speech delivered at the opening of the 1996 International Congress of Byzantine Studies in Copenhagen. See, for example, *Vizantiiskii Vremennik*, 58 (83) (1999), pp. 10–12.
 31. See Ernst Kantorowicz, "Oriens Augusti—Lever du Roi," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 17 (1963), pp. 119–77.
 32. See Spyridon Lampros, *Hellenides vivliographoi kai kyriai kodikon kata tous mesous aionas kai epi Tourkokratias* (Athens: P. D. Sakellariou, 1903). Thirty-one women are quoted by Lampros; of these, it is certain that twenty-four were either scribes (five) or owners/donors (nineteen) of Greek manuscripts. Nuns prevail in the former category and in the latter, ladies occupying an elevated station in life.
 33. See *Vizantiiskii Vremennik*, 58 (83) (1999), p. 5.
 34. These miracle workers were Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom, as well as Philippe de Montebello, who gave his benevolent nod to the whole enterprise. Byzantine studies owes them a debt of gratitude.

Byzantine Monasticism and the Liturgical Arts

Visitors to the "Glory of Byzantium" exhibition at The Metropolitan Museum of Art could not fail to notice the links between monasticism and many of the works on display. The magnificent gold and silver processional cross from The Cleveland Museum of Art, for example, features on its reverse a gold repoussé medallion of Saint Sabas, founder of the Lavra of Mar Saba near Jerusalem, and niello figures of other early monastic fathers from Egypt and Palestine (fig. 1). We know from a drawing that the bottom arm, now missing, bore an inscription stating that the cross was commissioned by the monk Nicholas, founder of the otherwise unknown Monastery of Glastine.¹ Such a cross, commissioned by a monastic founder to serve a liturgical purpose and clearly designed for an audience of monks, now appears as an art object displayed in a museum case.² The same holds true for the manuscripts and icons so generously lent to the exhibition by three of the great centers of a living Byzantine tradition, The Holy Monastery of Iveron on Mount Athos, The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai, and The Holy Monastery of Saint John the Theologian on Patmos. All these works have been removed from their liturgical context. In this paper I should like to restore the monastic ambience in which and for which many of these masterpieces

were made. My theme is the role played by Byzantine monasteries in fostering the creation and conservation of works of portable art, focusing on three topics: production, patronage, and preservation. I shall limit my discussion to the period covered by the exhibition, the ninth through the thirteenth century, and concentrate primarily on the evidence of written sources. As one would expect, works of art associated with monasteries are almost exclusively objects designed for liturgical use, and fall into four categories: illuminated books, icons, liturgical vessels, and textiles.

PRODUCTION OF WORKS OF ART IN A MONASTIC CONTEXT

Contemporary practice in Orthodox monasteries, where monks paint icons and execute wood carvings (fig. 2) and nuns make lace and embroidery and the occasional icon (figs. 3, 4), might seem to suggest that medieval Byzantine monasteries were important artistic centers that produced many of the service books and liturgical furnishings necessary for the conduct of the various ecclesiastical offices. As the painstaking research by my art-historian colleagues has shown, however, one must exercise great caution in assigning deluxe works of art, such as were assembled in the Metropolitan Museum exhibition, to monastic workshops rather than to lay ateliers.³ In the majority of monasteries, the reality must have approximated rather the activities depicted on a fifteenth-century icon from Crete on which desert fathers are seen copying manuscripts, weaving baskets, and carving wooden spoons with small axes (fig. 5).⁴

One indication of the paucity of artistic activity in the ordinary monastery is the evidence of saints' lives and of monastic foundation charters, which almost never allude to



Figure 1. Fragment of a processional cross with Saint Sabas and Eastern monastic saints (reverse). Byzantine, mid-11th century. Silver, silver gilt, and niello: 29.5 x 45.1 cm. The Cleveland Museum of Art (70.36)

monks as artists. There is the occasional reference to monks carving crosses out of wood to distribute to pilgrims as amulets,⁵ but virtually no descriptions of monks painting icons or illuminating manuscripts.⁶

Saints' Lives and, more rarely, monastic foundation charters do refer to scribal activity in monasteries. Among celebrated Byzantine monks who worked as calligraphers one might mention Theophanes the Confessor (about 760–March 12, 817), Neilos

of Rossano (about 910–September 26, 1004), and Athanasios of Athos (925/30–about July 5, 1001),⁷ but we must assume that most of them were producing the undecorated manuscripts needed for daily church services and for private reading and study by the monks, especially in cases where the texts emphasize the rapid rate of copying.⁸ As Anthony Cutler has shown, in the period under review here monks played an essential role in the copying of manuscripts. The statistics he

has assembled, based on scribal signatures, suggest that in the ninth century one third of all scribes were monastic, while in the tenth and eleventh centuries this figure rose to fifty percent, declining slightly to forty-two percent in the twelfth century.⁹ Preserved colophons of monastic scribes often emphasize that they carried out their work of copying in a spirit of devotion, in the hope that such pious labors might help them attain salvation on Judgment Day.¹⁰

At some larger monasteries, such as the Evergetis¹¹ and the Stoudios in Constantinople, full-fledged scriptoria were established. A list of penances prescribed at the Stoudios for scribes whose work was unsatisfactory gives us a glimpse into scriptorium practice. There was a *protokalligraphos* (chief scribe) responsible for preparing the parchment and assigning copying tasks to his subordinates. Scribes were punished for such infractions as breaking their pens deliberately in a fit of anger, taking someone else's quire, or not following instructions.¹² This last text, however—and, indeed, literary sources in general—is silent on the illumination of manuscripts, and we must depend on the visual evidence of the manuscripts themselves, and the rare colophons that identify scribe and illuminator, for insights into the workshops that produced illuminated headpieces, ornamental initials, and full-page miniatures.

It is now generally accepted that in most instances scribes and illuminators worked separately,¹³ and that even where a monastic scriptorium existed, the manuscript might be sent to an outside lay workshop for ornamentation after the initial copying of the text was completed. The scribe might execute simple ornament and initial letters in ink, but usually any process involving paint and the application of gold ground was left to the illuminator. At a few monasteries, however, such as the Stoudios in Constantinople, which seems to have specialized in book production, and perhaps on Mount Athos and on Mount Sinai,¹⁴ so isolated from any

lay workshop, a scribe might also illuminate the manuscript, or work hand in hand with an illuminator in the same scriptorium.

A prime example of a manuscript produced in a monastic context is the eleventh-century Theodore Psalter (London, The British Library, Department of Manuscripts, Add. Ms. 19352), a marginal psalter commissioned by Michael, abbot of the Stoudios Monastery, in 1066.¹⁵ The monk and *protopresbyteros* (chief presbyter) Theodore, of the same monastery, both copied and illuminated (*χρυσογραφηθὲν*) the manuscript, as we are informed by a colophon. Among other works for which both text and image have been assigned to the Stoudios scriptorium is the Barberini Psalter (Vatican City, Vat. Barberinianus gr. 372), derived from the same model as the Theodore Psalter.¹⁶ In contrast to the latter, however, which was specifically designed for use by the abbot, the Barberini Psalter was an imperial commission. Other decorated manuscripts produced at the Stoudios about this time include three illustrated *menologia* (collections of saints' Lives arranged according to the Church calendar) of Symeon Metaphrastes and three Gospel lectionaries. Jeffrey Anderson has suggested that at least some of these manuscripts were the result of outside commissions and were not designed for use within the Stoudios Monastery.¹⁷

Even where an inscription seems to state clearly that a monk was responsible for both copying and illuminating a manuscript caution is in order. The Melbourne Gospels (Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria, cod. 710/5), for example, bears a portrait of the monk Theophanes, who is called in an epigram the donor, scribe, and illuminator of the manuscript (fig. 6).¹⁸ He may have been only the donor, however, since it was a Byzantine convention for the patron to take credit for having "copied" or "painted" a manuscript when his role was, in fact, limited to commissioning and paying for the creation of the work.¹⁹

The attribution of icons to monastic workshops is even trickier, since icons very

rarely bear artists' signatures.²⁰ As mentioned above, the literary evidence on monk-artists is extremely skimpy, and the term *zographos* (painter of icons or frescoes) only rarely is applied to a monk in surviving texts. One example is the heroic ninth-century monk and icon painter Lazaros, who, during the Iconoclastic controversy, stubbornly continued to practice his craft. He was punished by having his hands severely burned with hot irons, but recovered sufficiently to paint an icon of John the Baptist at the Monastery of the Prodomos tou Phoberou.²¹

Although there is no documentary proof, some medieval icons have been assigned tentatively to workshops on Mounts Athos or Sinai. It is assumed, for example, that certain painted templon beams from Athos and Sinai must have been executed on site, presumably because of their size and configuration for a specific location.²² Moreover, it has been argued that icons produced at Sinai between the tenth and thirteenth centuries have a distinguishing technical feature—the creation of “a special reflection of light on the gold background by the use of a compass equipped with a small brush”—as well as standardized decoration on the reverse.²³

Evidence for monastic production of other types of art besides manuscripts and icons is extremely scant. A precious list of artisans who practiced their crafts at the Stoudios Monastery, always atypical because of its large size and highly specialized personnel, includes weavers and “those who manufacture liturgical vessels with fire and iron.”²⁴ The weavers were not producing fine brocades for liturgical vestments, however, but woolen cloth for monastic habits, as can be deduced from a passage in Theodore's penitential, which specifies that the workers were making tunics of wool.²⁵ As for the liturgical vessels, it is difficult to determine what the reference to iron signifies; did they have iron components,²⁶ or were the vessels hammered out on an iron anvil or with iron tools? A passage in the Life of Euthymios the Younger, one of the Athonite pioneers,



Figure 2. An Athonite monk painting an icon of Saint Nicholas. From C. Hellier, *Monasteries of Greece* (London: 1996), p. 166

supports the first interpretation, that probably iron cores are meant; the text states that when Euthymios founded a monastery near the Holy Mountain, certain pious individuals brought him gold, silver, bronze, and iron, “for the manufacture of liturgical vessels.”²⁷ I very much doubt that skilled metalworkers were available in a brand-new provincial monastic foundation; more likely, these donors were offering raw materials that could be made into liturgical vessels by specialized craftsmen in a nearby town, perhaps Thessalonike.

Likewise, there is no indication that ivories or steatites ever were produced in a monastic context; most probably, as Anthony Cutler has argued, the demanding craft of carving ivory and stone was practiced by highly trained lay professionals either at home or in small workshops.²⁸ As



Figure 3. Icon painting at the Convent of Ormylia, Greece. From S. A. Papadopoulos, *Ormylia: The Holy Coenobium of the Annunciation* (Athens: 1992), fig. 91



Figure 4. Embroidery workshop at the Convent of Ormylia, Greece. From S. A. Papadopoulos, *Ormylia: The Holy Coenobium of the Annunciation* (Athens: 1992), fig. 95

for deluxe woven and embroidered textiles, textual references from the Middle Byzantine period all suggest that the fabrics were manufactured in either imperial or private lay workshops.²⁹

When we turn to Byzantine nunneries, evidence for artistic activity is virtually nonexistent, in contrast to the situation in the medieval West, where in at least some convents nuns worked as calligraphers, illuminators, weavers, and embroiderers.³⁰ Byzantine nuns did engage in textile production, but it was mostly cloth for their own habits or for monks in nearby monasteries;³¹ only in very late Byzantium and the post-Byzantine period are there references to nuns working as embroiderers.³²

With regard to monasteries as centers for the production of art, therefore, my

conclusion—based primarily on the absence of textual evidence—must be essentially negative. Although the copying of unadorned manuscripts was a standard activity in monasteries, very few monks worked as artists, and they were almost exclusively book illuminators and icon painters. This conclusion should not be surprising. Many Byzantine monasteries were quite small, with perhaps twelve to thirty monks, a number barely sufficient to carry out the basic requirements of performing the Church offices and providing for the physical needs of the brethren. Only very large monasteries, such as the Stoudios or the Lavra on Mount Athos, could accommodate specialized craftsmen able to produce sophisticated works of art. Thus, as we shall see, monasteries that needed liturgical manuscripts or Eucharistic vessels would generally

farm out these artistic commissions to lay professionals, sometimes in distant cities.

At the same time it must be admitted that systematic archaeological investigation of Byzantine monastic complexes may alter the picture I have sketched. Excavations at Bulgarian monasteries of the ninth and tenth centuries already have revealed considerable material evidence of monastic workshops. For example, finds at the monastery at Pliska, founded by Boris-Michael (r. 852–89), suggest the presence of a scriptorium and bookbinding operation. The Monastery of Tuzluluka, near Preslav, housed a workshop for the manufacture of ornamented ceramic tiles. The most extensive finds, at the “monastery of the palace” (at Manastira in Preslav), indicate the presence of workshops for the carving of bone and stone, as well as for the production of ceramic plaques, glass, metalwork, and enamels.³³ It remains to be seen whether this was a feature particular to Bulgarian monasteries, or whether new archaeological investigation will provide evidence documenting similar activities at Byzantine monasteries.

MONASTERIES AS PATRONS OF LITURGICAL ART

The evidence for monastic involvement in the arts is much more compelling when we look at the role of Byzantine monasteries as patrons and users of liturgical works of art. Although some monastic rules prohibited monks from privately possessing icons,³⁴ there can be no question but that, as institutions, religious houses, which required substantial liturgical furnishings to carry out daily offices and the celebration of the Eucharist, stimulated the production of vast quantities of liturgical art, from modest objects in unadorned bronze to deluxe works in silver gilt ornamented with enamels and precious stones.

We can gain some idea of the voracious requirements of monastic churches by examining the *typikon* (book of rules) of the Monastery of the Pantokrator in Constantinople, a twelfth-century foundation endowed



Figure 5. Details of the Icon of the Dormition of Saint Sabas, showing monks weaving baskets, copying manuscripts, and carving wooden spoons. Cretan, 15th century. Tempera on wood: overall, 57 x 67 cm. Public Library, Lefkada. From M. Acheimastou-Potamianou, *Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art* (Athens: 1985), no. 130, p. 129

by the emperor John II Komnenos (r. 1118–43). Among the chapters of the *typikon* is a detailed list of the prescribed lighting for one of the monastery’s churches, the Eleousa: one lamp in the conch; one in the area of the *synthronon* (bench for the clergy in the apse of a church); five lamps in front of icons; one lamp in the dome; one lamp in each of the three apses; seven lamps in the middle of the main iconostasis; three lamps on each of two



Figure 6. Frontispiece of a Gospel book, with the monk Theophanes offering a Gospel book to the Virgin. Byzantine, about 1100. Tempera and gold on vellum: 24.2 x 17.4 cm. National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne (cod. 710/5, Felton Bequest, 1959, fol. 1v). From H. Buchthal, "An Illuminated Byzantine Gospel Book of About 1100 A.D.," *Special Bulletin of the National Gallery of Victoria* (Melbourne: 1961), cover illustration

small iconostases; one lamp in each of three vaults and three in the narthex—totaling thirty lamps in all. In addition, a three-branched candlestick was required as well as twenty candles, each of which needed some sort of stand. On Friday nights, when a special procession was held, an additional twenty-two lamps were prescribed, plus another nineteen candles.³⁵ When we remember that the monastery had two other churches, each of which required similar lighting as well as service books and a full set of Eucharistic vessels, we can begin to understand the quantity of liturgical furnishings necessary to support the divine services of a monastery. Moreover, in addition to the icons that permanently graced the templon, numerous other icons were necessary for special dominical feasts or feast days of the saints and the Virgin.

An idea of the deluxe liturgical furnishings used in monasteries on a daily basis, or reserved for special occasions, also can be gained from surviving inventories of monastic possessions. A good example is the fragmentary inventory found at the end of the *typikon* of the twelfth-century imperial Nunnery of the Kecharitomene in Constantinople, founded by Irene Doukaina (about 1066–February 19, 1123), mother of John II Komnenos and wife of Alexios I (r. 1081–1118). The convent, originally designed to house twenty-four nuns, owned seventeen icons, six metal crosses, four reliquaries (three of which contained fragments of the True Cross), four full sets of Eucharistic vessels, plus assorted liturgical textiles and vestments.³⁶ The contemporary Monastery of Xylourgou on Mount Athos possessed at least forty icons, assorted reliquaries, and three sets of Eucharistic vessels, as well as silver crosses, lamps, and candlesticks; ostrich eggs; censers; and curtains, liturgical veils, and vestments.³⁷

Monasteries acquired the necessary books and furnishings by commissioning their manufacture or through the receipt of donations from the pious. As suggested above, abbots would usually place their orders with

workshops in urban centers. For example, in the tenth century, Ignatios, of the provincial Monastery of Bathyrhyax, went to Constantinople to procure sacred vessels, a cross, icons, and a Gospel book with a silver cover. When the objects were ready, he sent them back to the monastery with some of his associates.³⁸ It makes one shudder to think of the perils to which such valuables were exposed as they made the long journey from the capital to eastern Anatolia, probably by ship and mule. The Life of the tenth-century saint Nikon ho Metanoieite describes the purchase of works of art in Constantinople by another provincial abbot. While the abbot Gregory was in the capital on business, his monastery in Sparta received a windfall in the form of seventy-two gold coins presented by a repentant tax collector. The money was forwarded to the abbot, who promptly used it to purchase “a quantity of pyxides and precious vessels.”³⁹

In ninth-century Thessalonike, the abbess of a convent turned to a local stone carver, who was also a priest, when she wanted to commission a sarcophagus to house the remains of her recently deceased mother, the blessed Theodora. In collaboration with a male patron of the convent, who apparently provided the necessary funds, she ordered a custom-made marble sarcophagus, whose exterior was to be covered with various carvings. She specified that it was to have a wooden lid with an opening at the head end, so that the saint’s relics could be seen by pilgrims. As can be deduced from the account of the translation of Theodora’s relics, it took the stone carver a month or less to complete his commission.⁴⁰

Monasteries acquired many sacred treasures through the donations of pious benefactors, who either provided the funds to pay for a commission or donated a previously created object. A prime example of a special commission is the incomparable manuscript of the Liturgical Homilies of Saint Gregory of Nazianzos, now housed on Mount Sinai (The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine,

gr. 339). In the mid-twelfth century, the manuscript was dedicated to the Pantanassa Monastery on the tiny island of Glykeria near Constantinople by Joseph, abbot of the celebrated Monastery of the Pantokrator mentioned above. Since Joseph bore the epithet Hagioglykerites, we can assume that he was associated with the Glykeria Monastery in an earlier phase of his career. An epigram states that Joseph “[had] made the silver-white book dappled with wrought gold” and presented it “for the cleansing of his sins.”⁴¹ The representation of Gregory of Nazianzos as a monk rather than a bishop in the frontispiece miniature surely reflects the creation of this work for a monastic audience (fig. 7).⁴²

Yet another deluxe manuscript in the exhibition, the Leo Bible (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ms. Vat. Reg. gr. 1) was also specially ordered for presentation to a monastery. We learn from inscriptions in the manuscript that Leo the *patrikios* (high-ranking dignitary) and *sakellarios* (administrative official; comptroller), shown on the verso of folio 2 offering his bible to the Virgin (fig. 8), had the bible made for an unknown monastery dedicated to Saint Nicholas, which had been founded by his brother Constantine, since deceased. The miniature on folio 3r, facing the dedication page, shows Constantine on the right kneeling before Saint Nicholas; to the left is Makar, abbot of the monastery. Leo, like Joseph, specifically notes that he is presenting his gift in expiation of his sins.⁴³

Motivations for donations of works of art were manifold but generally they were prompted by piety, spiritual devotion, and humility, as symbolized by the small scale of the donor portrait on the large Sinai icon of Moses and the Burning Bush (fig. 9);⁴⁴ the figure at the lower left is so tiny as almost to escape notice. Sometimes offerings of sacred objects were made by a monk or nun upon the occasion of their entrance into monastic life. Although mandatory donations at the time of the taking of monastic vows were specifically prohibited by some foundation

charters, freewill offerings were always welcome. As the Kecharitomene *typikon* states, “What is brought in a spirit of faith as an offering to our Mistress Full of Grace . . . and will serve for the upkeep of the monastery and assure the memory and spiritual benefit should not be rejected.”⁴⁵ Examples of such “entrance” gifts are the three silver-gilt icons, whose manufacture was commissioned by the youthful eighth-century iconodule heroine Theodosia for the nunnery she joined in Constantinople.⁴⁶ Likewise, in the eleventh century, Lazaros, the future stylite of Mount Galesion, gave the abbot at Mar Saba near Jerusalem a Gospel book valued at twelve nomismata when he returned to the monastery and asked to be received once more into the community.⁴⁷

As we learn from hagiographical texts, other works of art were donated as ex-votos in thanksgiving for miraculous healing or deliverance from danger.⁴⁸ When the young son of a public official was cured of paralysis at the shrine of Saint Nikon in Sparta, the miracle was recorded in an inscription on a silver censer presented to the monastery by, we assume, the boy’s grateful father. The same incident was commemorated on an icon, again, we suppose, commissioned by the boy’s family.⁴⁹ The tenth-century anonymous account of miracles performed at the shrine of the Pege just outside the walls of Constantinople records several gifts made to the monastery after miraculous cures. For example, following her healing from an issue of blood, Empress Irene (r. 780–802) presented the Pege shrine with gold-embroidered textiles and curtains, a crown, and Eucharistic vessels adorned with pearls and precious stones. She took the additional step of commissioning mosaics for the church reminiscent of the famous Justinian and Theodora panels in Ravenna, and had herself and her son Constantine VI (r. 780–97) depicted carrying their offerings.⁵⁰ A century later, the patriarch Stephen of Constantinople (r. 886–93), cured of an abscess on his chest by water from the sacred spring, had an *endyte* (altar

cloth) made from his own liturgical vestments, specifying that it was to be used on the Pege altar on the feast day of the Exaltation of the Cross (September 14), the date on which he had been healed.⁵¹ In a variation on this theme, a court chamberlain named Gabriel, whose nephew was held captive by the Bulgarians, commissioned a Gospel book and dedicated it to the Church of Pege together with a petition for his nephew’s release from captivity. The very same Sunday on which he made the presentation, his nephew arrived back in Constantinople safe and sound.⁵²

Yet another underlying motivation for the pious to donate both immovable and movable properties (including liturgical furnishings) to a monastery was to secure the prayers of the monks or nuns for the soul of the donor in perpetuity. Thus, the emperor Leo VI (r. 886–912) gave the monastery at Psamathia silver and white vestments, as well as a book that he had copied himself and had bound with a purple, silver, and gold cover, so that he would be commemorated eternally by the monks.⁵³ This connection between donation and commemoration is spelled out quite explicitly in several monastic foundation charters, for instance, in the inventories of donated objects. As the eleventh-century monastic founder Michael Attaleiates states, “These are the objects listed in the inventory of the monastery and poorhouse . . . to which should be added subsequent acquisitions . . . either from me again, or from other God-loving and pious men, whose names ought to be set down in the register of the donated movable or immovable objects, so that they may be commemorated in perpetuity in the daily and nocturnal offices of the holy church.”⁵⁴ The *sebastokrator* Isaac Komnenos (January 16, 1093–about 1152), son of Irene Doukaina, foundress of the Kecharitomene Nunnery, also was concerned with posthumous commemoration at the Kosmosoteira Monastery he established in Thrace. When he moved his tomb from Constantinople to the narthex of the church at Pherrai, he gave the

monastery an icon of Christ, a mosaic icon of the Theotokos—to which he added a gold and silver frame—and an enkolpion (reliquary with a sacred image, worn around the neck), the last, to be placed in the center of the lid of a marble tomb, in a silver setting. Each evening after vespers the monks were to assemble in the narthex in front of the tomb and icons to pray for God's mercy on Isaac's soul. Isaac further enjoined that the icon of the Virgin "should remain resting in that spot throughout all time, preserved without change, to mediate for my wretched soul."⁵⁵

Monastic officials also drew up documents called *synodika* listing the appropriate day of commemoration of a donor and the items donated, which could range from money, oxen, or land, to chalices and manuscripts. Thus, at the Athonite Monastery of Iveron, the *synodikon* drawn up in the eleventh century and revised in the twelfth century notes that the former abbot Michael, who gave a Gospel book with clasp, was to be commemorated annually on December 20, while the merchant David, who had presented the monastery with a silver chalice and paten, was to be remembered on October 27.⁵⁶

MONASTERIES AS STOREHOUSES OF ART

As we have just seen, Isaac Komnenos hoped that his gift of an icon of the Virgin would remain in the church narthex at Pherrai for eternity, "preserved without change," but while the church has survived, the icons have long since disappeared. In other monasteries, however, primarily those in isolated rural locations, less exposed to enemy attack and pillaging than their urban counterparts, sacred treasures have been preserved to this day. It is important to remember, though, that many of the objects in monastic treasuries have not been there continuously since Byzantine times, but have been moved from one locale to another. The vicissitudes of the Sinai Liturgical Homilies of Saint Gregory



Figure 7. Author portrait from the Liturgical Homilies of Saint Gregory of Nazianzos. Byzantine, about 1150. Tempera and gold on vellum: 32.3 x 25.4 cm. The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Mount Sinai (gr. 339, fol. 4v)

of Nazianzos, for example, can be traced through scribal notations that tell us that the manuscript, originally made for a monastery near Constantinople, was later taken to Crete (perhaps after one of the conquests of the capital), and then brought to Sinai in the mid-sixteenth century.⁵⁷ At the same time one should note that this book always seems to have been safeguarded in a monastery,



Figure 8. Leo Offering His Bible to the Virgin. Illumination from the Bible of Leo Sakellarios. Byzantine, about 940. Tempera and gold on vellum: 41 x 27 cm. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City (Ms. Vat. Reg. gr. I, fol. 2v)

whether on an island in the Sea of Marmara, on Crete, or on Sinai, to which it was carried from Crete by a monk named Germanos.⁵⁸

Monasteries made conscious provision for the safekeeping of the liturgical works of art they had acquired by purchase or donation. First of all, a room in the church called the *skeuophylakion* (literally, “storage room for vessels”) was set aside for the storage of liturgical objects not in current use. Most often this was the *diakonikon* (sacristy south of the apse), but sometimes a side chapel served this purpose. A high-ranking monastic official called the *skeuophylax* (keeper of the vessels) was in charge of this storeroom; his or her

duties are spelled out carefully in several monastic foundation charters.

Thus, at the small Constantinopolitan Monastery of Saint Mamas, the *skeuophylax*, who here doubled as *chartophylax* (archivist), safeguarded the sacred vessels and furnishings and handed them out to the *ekklesiarches* (monastic official in charge of the church) for services as necessary. When not in use, the liturgical objects were to be kept in the sacristy, locked up and sealed by the abbot and the *skeuophylax*. Probably, the procedures were the same as for documents; the latter were placed in chests, locked by two keys, and secured by the wax seals of both the abbot and the *skeuophylax*, so that neither could open a given chest without the other’s knowledge.⁵⁹

The *typikon* for the Kecharitomene Nunnery stressed that precise records be kept of the contents of the sacristy, in the form of a *brebion* (inventory). Much as institutions today keep a backup copy of computer records off site, the nunnery prepared four copies of the inventory, placing one parchment copy on permanent deposit at the Cathedral of Hagia Sophia. A paper copy was available for daily use at the monastery.⁶⁰ Another inventory detailed those objects kept in the church, for which the *ekklesiarchissa* was responsible; at the time of her investiture, she was given a copy of this inventory by the *skeuophylakissa*.⁶¹

Revised and updated inventories sometimes were drawn up on the occasion of the installation of a new abbot. Thus, upon the investiture of the abbot Christopher at the Athonite Monastery of Xylourgou in 1142, an external commission of Athonite officials surveyed and registered all movable monastic properties, from icons to hoes and spades: Icons and liturgical furnishings came first in the inventory. All of these items were entrusted for safekeeping to the abbot, who, in turn, would delegate responsibility to the *skeuophylax*.⁶²

Each inventory entry provided sufficient description of the object for identification purposes and to determine its intrinsic value; its status as a purchase or donation frequently

was recorded as well. The features typically noted for icons were their subject matter; materials (painted wood or metal); occasionally, size (“large” or “small”); and whether they had a frame. For textiles, the type of liturgical cloth was identified (chalice veil, icon veil, or altar cloth), the fabric and color, and iconographical elements; only rarely was there some notation of age (“new” or “very old”) or style (“an embroidered cloth, of Saracen manufacture” or a silk-cloth hanging “with borders in the style of Attaleia”⁶³). As for manuscripts, the characteristics singled out were the type of book (psalter or Gospel lectionary), materials (paper or parchment), script (minuscule or uncial), and, especially, any precious ornaments on the covers, detailed down to the last pearl or silver stud. Condition is seldom mentioned, and we are never told whether the book contained any illuminated miniatures or headpieces. As Nicolas Oikonomides has observed, in inventories aesthetic qualities are deemed unimportant; instead, emphasis is on the materials.⁶⁴ Nonetheless, medieval inventories provided much of the same information that museum registration cards or labels do today, with the primary difference being that in Byzantium there was little interest in date and place of manufacture; rather, much more attention was paid to the intrinsic value of the object made of precious metals or adorned with gems and pearls, with even the exact number of jewels or the precise weight sometimes given.⁶⁵

Such lists kept monastic officials honest and ensured that they did not steal or sell any of the sacred treasures, for objects donated to or otherwise acquired by a monastery were viewed as inalienable, inasmuch as they were dedicated to God; only under extreme circumstances could they be sold. As stated in the eleventh-century *typikon* for the Evergetis Monastery—a document that served as a prototype for the regulation of numerous later monastic foundations—liturgical vessels and furnishings, holy icons, and books never were to be removed, because they had been acquired “with great effort and labor,” and



Figure 9. Icon of Moses and the Burning Bush, with a donor portrait at the lower left. Byzantine, early 13th century. Tempera and gold on wood: 92 x 64 cm. The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Mount Sinai

were dedicated to the Virgin, and anyone who took them was guilty of sacrilege. An exception was made only if the monastery suffered damage from fire, earthquake, or enemy attack; then, sacred treasures could be sold to raise funds for the restoration or repair of buildings. In modern museum

parlance, objects could be deaccessioned only in case of critical need for capital improvements. The *typikon* further provided that sacred objects could be sold only after a meeting of the senior monastic officials, with the removal of each object noted by the abbot in the inventory. Then, a list of the deaccessioned objects was to be drawn up and signed by all officials present. This document, which was to describe fully each object sold and the reason for its deaccessioning, would be placed on permanent file in the *skeuophylakion*.⁶⁶ A later *typikon* adds two further conditions: that the monastic officials had to consult specialists, who could appraise the value of the objects for sale, and that the objects be sold only to other churches.⁶⁷

As for conservation, there is little information on precautions taken by the sacristan for the preservation of the objects in his or her keeping. Only one *typikon* of the Middle Byzantine period, that of Isaac Komnenos, founder of the Kosmosoteira Monastery in Thrace, evinces specific concern for the physical condition of the sacred treasures. He writes, "As for the holy icons that have been dedicated to stand at my tomb, [which are] renowned as paintings, if ever over time their wooden parts should start to fall apart, the superior of the time must not fail to [employ] a first-rate craftsman to lay the images again onto other boards [fashioned] with skill out of elm wood, and must set the images back up where they were before, at my tomb."⁶⁸ Here, Isaac is describing the transfer of an image to a new support, a practice still common today.

Despite scant evidence, we probably can assume that the monastic founders and sacristans of this period took the same precautions noted in later texts from the Palaiologan era. The *skeuophylakissa* of the Lips Nunnery in Constantinople was enjoined by the foundress to expose the sacred vessels and furnishings periodically to the sun and fresh air. The sun would have done the color and fabric of the textiles no good, but the procedure undoubtedly was aimed at the eradica-

tion of insects.⁶⁹ Another foundress of a Palaiologan nunnery, the *protostratorissa* Anna Strategopoulina, who presented liturgical books and sacred vessels to her convent, including a parchment manuscript containing homilies and saints' Lives, also was concerned about the treatment of her gifts. A scribal note begged the nuns to handle the "expensive, deluxe and wondrous book" with reverence and care, making sure that their hands were clean before touching the book, and not letting the pages be spattered with oil or wax.⁷⁰ In a similar vein, a founder of a Cretan nunnery about the year 1400 forbade the nuns to circulate library books outside the convent, for if they were damaged the convent had no one to repair them.⁷¹

I do not want to overemphasize the role of monasteries in the preservation of Byzantine liturgical arts. Even in sacristies such works were vulnerable to fire and theft; the ravages of moisture, soot, candle wax, lamp oil, worms, and moths; and the natural processes of decay over the centuries. Patmos exemplifies the losses sustained by monastic libraries, for more than half of the parchment volumes listed in the inventory of 1200 are no longer there.⁷² Nonetheless, our knowledge of Byzantine art would be much poorer without the liturgical books and furnishings preserved in the treasuries of medieval and modern monasteries. As already stated above, patrons and monks alike viewed the objects donated to monasteries as dedicated to the service of God, the Virgin, and the saints. As sacred treasures they were the inalienable possessions of the monastery, to be kept safe for eternity. Many a Byzantine manuscript included the curse of the 318 Fathers of the First Council of Nicaea upon anyone who removed a manuscript from the church to which it was presented.⁷³ Let us hope that the 318 Fathers temporarily held in abeyance their imprecation, and, from above, looked with favor upon the objects lent to The Metropolitan Museum of Art for such a splendid purpose: the glory of Orthodoxy and of Byzantium.

1. Helen C. Evans, "Fragment of a Processional Cross," in *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, eds. Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), no. 24, pp. 60–62.
2. I am borrowing from the observations made by Robert Nelson in a different context; see Robert Nelson, "The Discourse of Icons, Then and Now," *Art History* 12 (1989), p. 145.
3. See, for example, the remarks of Anthony Cutler in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, ed. Alexander Kazhdan et al., vol. 1 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), s.v. "artists," p. 197: "Although it is often supposed that monasteries maintained painters' workshops in addition to their scriptoria, there is no documentary proof for such a notion. Most tasks would have been farmed out, by monks and laymen alike, to professionals."
4. This icon, which depicts the Dormition of Saint Sabas, is in the Public Library, Lefkada; see Myrtali Acheimastou-Potamianou, *Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art* (Athens: Ministry of Culture and Byzantine and Christian Museum, 1985), no. 130. For similar scenes see the fifteenth-century icon from the Byzantine Museum, Athens, in Myrtali Acheimastou-Potamianou, "E koimese tou osiou Ephraim tou Syrou se mia proime Kretike eikona tou Byzantinou Mouseiou Athenon," *Euphrosynon. Apheroma ston Manole Chatzedake*, vol. 1 (Athens: Tameio Archaologikon Poron kai Apallotrioseon, 1991), pp. 41–56, colorpl. 1.
5. See "Vita of Ioannikios by Peter," ed. J. van den Gheyn, in *Acta Sanctorum Novembris*, vol. 2, pt. 1 (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1894), p. 429A; "Vita of Peter of Atroa," in *La Vie merveilleuse de Saint Pierre d'Atroa*, ed. Vitalien Laurent (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1956), p. 209, ch. 76.10–12; "Vita of Luke the Stylite," in *Les Saints stylites*, ed. Hippolyte Delehaye (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, Paris: A. Picard, 1923), p. 215.14–15.
6. A rare exception is the elderly recluse artist in Rhaidestos, presumably a solitary monk, mentioned in the Life of Saint Mary the Younger. Following a vision in a dream, he painted an icon of the deceased holy woman, and sent it to the monastery that developed around Mary's wonder-working tomb. See "Vita of Mary the Younger of Vizye," in *Acta Sanctorum Novembris*, vol. 4 (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1925), p. 699, ch. 18; English translation by Angeliki Laiou, in *Holy Women of Byzantium: Ten Saints' Lives in English Translation*, ed. Alice-Mary Talbot (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1996), pp. 272–73.
7. See *Vitae duae antiquae sancti Athanasii Athonitae*, ed. Jacques Noret (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 1982), Vita A, chapters 37.43–44, 53.7–13, 54.4–5, 95.8–9; Vita B, chapters 9.22–23, 12.34–38, 19.18–24, 35.52–53; *Mefodiia patriarcha konstantinopol'skogo Zhitie prep. Feofana Ispovednika*, ed. Vasilii Latyshev (Petrograd [Saint Petersburg]: Rossiiskaia Akademiia nauk, 1918), p. 16.13–15 and 18–21, p. 17.13, p. 20.25–26; *Bios kai politeia tou hosiou patros hemon Neilou tou Neou*, ed. Germano Giovanelli (Grottaferrata: Badia di Grottaferrata, 1972), pp. 63, 68, 78.
8. For example, Athanasios of Athos copied one psalter every week (*Vitae duae antiquae sancti Athanasii Athonitae*, ed. Jacques Noret [Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 1982], Vita A, ch. 53.6–13) and Neilos of Rossano completed three psalters in a few days (*Bios kai politeia tou hosiou patros hemon Neilou tou Neou*, ed. Germano Giovanelli [Grottaferrata: Badia di Grottaferrata, 1972], p. 68).
9. Anthony Cutler, "The Social Status of Byzantine Scribes, 800–1500. A Statistical Analysis Based on Vogel-Gardthausen," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 74 (1981), pp. 328–34.
10. See, for example, the note in an eleventh-century Gospel book at Mount Athos (The Holy Monastery of Saint Panteleemon, Cod. 27), in which the monastic scribe Luke begs the readers of the book to pray for his soul, and similar notes by the scribe Arsenios; see Eleni D. Kakoulides, "He bibliotheke tes Mones Prodromou-Petras sten Konstantinoupole," *Hellenika* 21 (1968), pp. 17, 21–22.
11. Barbara Crostini, "Towards a Study of the Scriptorium of the Monastery of the Theotokos Evergetis: Preliminary Remarks," in *The Theotokos Evergetis and Eleventh-Century Monasticism*, eds. Margaret Mullett and Anthony Kirby (Belfast: Belfast Byzantine Enterprises, 1994), pp. 176–97.
12. See *Vita of Theodore of Stoudios*, *Patrologiae cursus completus, Series Graeca*, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne, vol. 99 (Paris: Garnier, 1903), col. 1740B–D. For more on the scriptorium see Nikephoros Eleopoulos, *He bibliotheke kai to bibliographikon ergasterion tes mones tou Stoudiou* (Athens: I. Makres, 1967).
13. See Robert Nelson, "Illuminators," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, vol. 2, ed. Alexander Kazhdan et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 986: "Generally the scribe wrote the text of the manuscript, leaving space for the illuminator, who made a preliminary underdrawing, applied the gold ground, and then began to paint. . . ." For a detailed analysis of the relationship between scribes and illuminator in the Getty New Testament see *idem*, "Theoktistos and Associates in Twelfth-Century Constantinople: An Illustrated New Testament of A.D. 1133," *The J. Paul Getty Museum Journal* 15 (1987), pp. 58–59. See also Suzy Dufrenne, "Problèmes des ateliers de miniaturistes byzantins," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 31, no. 2 (1981), pp. 445–70, esp. pp. 454–61, who stresses "une séparation profonde entre la copie du texte et son ornementation d'une part et les figures et leur cadre ornemental d'autre part" (p. 461).

14. Nonetheless, Weitzmann and Galavaris conclude that "the number of manuscripts which can be proved to have been written at Sinai proper is relatively small compared with those imported from outside"; see Kurt Weitzmann and George Galavaris, *The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai. The Illuminated Greek Manuscripts*, vol. 1, *From the Ninth to the Twelfth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. 10.
15. See Jeffrey C. Anderson, "The Theodore Psalter," in *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, eds. Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), no. 53, pp. 98–99. See also Sirarpie Der Nersessian, *L'Illustration des psautiers grecs du moyen âge*, vol. 2, *Londres Add. 19.352* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1970), and Jeffrey C. Anderson, "On the Nature of the Theodore Psalter," *The Art Bulletin* 70 (1988), pp. 550–68. Charles Barber and John Lowden are currently preparing a facsimile edition to be distributed on a CD-ROM.
16. See Jeffrey C. Anderson, "The Date and Purpose of the Barberini Psalter," *Cahiers archéologiques* 31 (1983), pp. 35–67.
17. *Ibid.*, esp. pp. 59–60.
18. Hugo Buchthal, "An Illuminated Byzantine Gospel Book of About 1100 A.D.," *Special Bulletin of the National Gallery of Victoria* (Melbourne: National Gallery of Victoria, 1961), pp. 1–12, reprinted in Hugo Buchthal, *Art of the Mediterranean World A.D. 100–1400* (Washington, D.C.: Decatur House Press, 1983), pp. 140–49.
19. So cautions Robert Nelson, in "Theoktistos and Associates in Twelfth-Century Constantinople: An Illustrated New Testament of A.D. 1133," *The J. Paul Getty Museum Journal* 15 (1987), pp. 63–64. See also Annemarie Weyl Carr, "Women as Artists in the Middle Ages: The Dark Is Light Enough," in *Dictionary of Women Artists* (London: Fitzroy and Dearborn, in press). I thank Dr. Carr for letting me see this important survey in typescript.
20. An exception is John the monk, who painted a hexaptych in the early twelfth century; see Konstantinos A. Manafis, *Sinai: Treasures of the Monastery of Saint Catherine* (Athens: Ekdotike Athenon, 1990), p. 102, and note 1.
21. On Lazaros see *Synaxarium ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae. Propylaeum ad Acta sanctorum Novembris*, ed. Hippolyte Delehaye (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1902), pp. 231–34, and *Theophanes Continuatus*, ed. Immanuel Bekker (Bonn: E. Weber, 1838), pp. 102–3. Another example of a monk-painter is George the *zographos*, who witnessed the *typikon* of John I Tzimiskes in 972 (Anthony Cutler, "Artists," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, vol. 1, ed. Alexander Kazhdan et al. [New York: Oxford University Press, 1991], p. 199).
22. See, for example, Annemarie Weyl Carr, "Two Icons from a Templon Beam," and "Templon Beam with the Deesis and Feast Scenes," in *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, eds. Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), nos. 67 A–B, 248, pp. 119–20, 377–79, esp. p. 377: "Most beams at Sinai . . . were created as single units, with the scenes painted in sequence on long boards specially carpentered to fit their settings. This tells us that they must have been painted at Sinai itself."
23. See Konstantinos A. Manafis, *Sinai: Treasures of the Monastery of Saint Catherine* (Athens: Ekdotike Athenon, 1990), pp. 105–6. See also Annemarie Weyl Carr, "Icon with the Annunciation," in *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, eds. Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), no. 246, p. 375: "The reflective circles scored in the surface of the gold are known only on icons at Sinai."
24. See *Vita of Theodore of Stoudios*, *Patrologiae cursus completus*, Series Graeca, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne, vol. 99 (Paris: Garnier, 1903), col. 273 C.
25. See Theodore of Stoudios, *Poenae monasteriales*, in *ibid.*, col. 1748 B–C.
26. The silver processional crosses included in "The Glory of Byzantium" exhibition all have iron cores; see *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, eds. Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), nos. 23–27, pp. 23–67. I thank Susan Boyd for pointing out to me the use of iron in these objects.
27. See Louis Petit, "Vie et office de Saint Euthyme le Jeune," *Revue de l'Orient chrétien* 8 (1903), p. 197.11–14. A parallel case perhaps may be found in the *synaxarion* (Church calendar of fixed feasts) notice for Theodora of Kaisaris, an eighth-century saint, who presented gold, silver, pearls, and clothing to the nunnery as an entrance gift when she became a nun; see *Synaxarium ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae. Propylaeum ad Acta sanctorum Novembris*, ed. Hippolyte Delehaye (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1902), p. 355. The gold, silver, and pearls may have been provided to a lay workshop as raw materials for the manufacture of precious objects, or sold to obtain funds.
28. See Anthony Cutler, *The Hand of the Master: Craftsmanship, Ivory, and Society in Byzantium (9th–11th Centuries)* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 67–68. It is also worth noting that very few ivories have been preserved in a monastic context; those exhibited in "The Glory of Byzantium" came from museums, not monasteries. This may have been because the small size and finely detailed carving of ivory plaques made them particularly suitable for private devotion rather than communal worship in monastic churches, and therefore most of them undoubtedly were intended for private lay ownership; see *ibid.*, p. 228. Nonetheless, textual sources inform us that some ivories did find their way to

- monasteries, such as the ivory pyxis reused as a reliquary mentioned in the Patmos inventory of 1200 (see Charles Astruc, "L'Inventaire dressé en septembre 1200 du trésor et de la bibliothèque de Patmos. Édition diplomatique," *Travaux et Mémoires* 8 [1981], p. 21.25–26) or the two ivory carvings of the Dormition cited in the testament of Maximos, *hieromonachos* of the Monastery of Skoteine (see Manuel Gedeon, "Diatheke Maximou monachou ktitoros tes en Lydia mones Kotines [1247]," *Mikrasiatika chronika* 2 [1939], p. 282.1–2).
29. See Anna Gonosova, "Textiles," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, ed. Alexander Kazhdan et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), vol. 3, p. 2028.
 30. The only surveys of this subject to date are by Annemarie Weyl Carr, "Women and Monasticism in Byzantium: Introduction from an Art Historian," *Byzantinische Forschungen* 9 (1985), pp. 1–15; Annemarie Weyl Carr, "Women as Artists in the Middle Ages: The Dark Is Light Enough," *Dictionary of Women Artists* (London: Fitzroy and Dearborn, in press); and Soterios Kissas, "Kallitechnike cheirotechnia," in *Hormylia. Hiero koinobio Euangelismou tes Theotokou*, ed. Stelios A. Papadopoulos (Athens: Interamerican, 1991), pp. 129–58, esp. pp. 129, 132. On artistic nuns in the medieval West see, for example, Annemarie Weyl Carr, "Women Artists in the Middle Ages," *The Feminist Art Journal* 5 (1976), pp. 5–9, 26; Annemarie Weyl Carr, "Women as Artists in the Middle Ages: The Dark Is Light Enough," *Dictionary of Women Artists* (London: Fitzroy and Dearborn, in press); and, most recently, Jeffrey Hamburger, *Nuns as Artists: The Visual Culture of a Medieval Convent* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).
 31. Cloth production is described only in very generic terms in *typika*, such as that of the Kecharitomenē Nunnery in Constantinople; see Paul Gautier, "Le Typikon de la Théotokos Kécharitôménē," *Revue des études byzantines* 43 (1985), ch. 27, p. 75. One of the few references in hagiography to nuns spinning and weaving is found in the Life of Theodora of Thessalonike; see *Holy Women of Byzantium: Ten Saints' Lives in English Translation*, ed. Alice-Mary Talbot (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1996), pp. 188, 200. Theodora is specifically described as making coarse bags out of discarded bits of flax and wool. See also Paul Peeters, "S. Romain le néomartyr (+1 mai 780) d'après un document géorgien," *Analecta Bollandiana* 30 (1911), p. 410.8–11, which describes how the nuns at the eighth-century Monastery of Mantineon made cloth for the habits of the monks in an associated complex.
 32. See Soterios Kissas, "Kallitechnike cheirotechnia," in *Hormylia. Hiero koinobio Euangelismou tes Theotokou*, ed. Stelios A. Papadopoulos (Athens: Interamerican, 1991), p. 132, and Pauline Johnstone, *The Byzantine Tradition in Church Embroidery* (London: Tiranti, 1967), pp. 59–62.
 33. See T. Totev, "Les Monastères de Pliska et de Preslav aux IXe–Xe siècles," *Byzantinoslavica* 48 (1987), pp. 185–200. I am grateful to Dr. Brigitte Pitarakis for calling my attention to this article.
 34. See, for example, the Life of Lazaros Galesiotes, who instructed his monks to bring the icons from their cells to the church, for veneration; in their cells they were to say their prayers before a simple wooden cross (*Acta Sanctorum Novembris*, ed. Hippolyte Delehaye, vol. 3 [Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1910], p. 549B, ch. 138). Likewise, Athanasios of Athos forbade monks to keep icons in their cells at the Lavra; see *Vitae duae antiquae sancti Athanasii Athonitae*, ed. Jacques Noret (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 1982), Vita B, ch. 44, p. 179.38–40. At the Velusa Monastery near Strumica in Macedonia, in contrast, the monks were permitted to keep "holy icons for veneration" in their cells; see Louis Petit, "Le Monastère de Notre-Dame de la Pitié en Macédoine," *Izvestiia Russkogo arkhéologicheskogo instituta v Konstantinopole* 6 (1900–1901), ch. 5, p. 73.1–2.
 35. See Paul Gautier, "Le Typikon du Christ Sauveur Pantocrator," *Revue des études byzantines* 32 (1974), pp. 73–75.
 36. See Paul Gautier, "Le Typikon de la Théotokos Kécharitôménē," *Revue des études byzantines* 43 (1985), pp. 152–55.
 37. *Actes de Saint-Pantéléèmon*, ed. Paul Lemerle et al. (Paris: P. Lethielleux, 1982), pp. 65–76.
 38. *Synaxarium ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae. Propylaeum ad Acta sanctorum Novembris*, ed. Hippolyte Delehaye (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1902), pp. 84–85.
 39. See Denis F. Sullivan, *The Life of Saint Nikon* (Brookline, Mass.: Hellenic College Press, 1987), p. 188, ch. 58.
 40. See *Holy Women of Byzantium: Ten Saints' Lives in English Translation*, ed. Alice-Mary Talbot (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1996), pp. 220–21, esp. note 290.
 41. See Jeffrey C. Anderson, "The Liturgical Homilies of Saint Gregory of Nazianzos," in *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, eds. Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), no. 63, pp. 109–10. See also Jeffrey Anderson, "The Illustration of Cod. Sinai. Gr. 339," *The Art Bulletin* 61 (1979), pp. 167–85, and Kurt Weitzmann and George Galavaris, *The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai. The Illuminated Greek Manuscripts*, vol. 1, *From the Ninth to the Twelfth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), pp. 140–53.
 42. See the remarks by Robert Nelson, "Theoktistos and Associates in Twelfth-Century Constantinople: An Illustrated New Testament of A.D. 1133," *The J. Paul Getty Museum Journal* 15 (1987), p. 75.
 43. See Thomas F. Mathews, "Bible of Leo Sakellarios," in *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, eds. Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), no. 42, pp. 88–90. On the

- dedicatory inscriptions see Cyril Mango, "The Date of Cod. Regin. Gr. 1 and the 'Macedonian Renaissance,'" *Acta ad Archaeologiam et Artium Historiam Pertinentia* 4 (1969), pp. 121–26.
44. See Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, "Icon with Moses before the Burning Bush," in *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, eds. Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), no. 250, pp. 379–80.
 45. See Paul Gautier, "Le Typikon de la Théotokos Kécharitôménè," *Revue des études byzantines* 43 (1985), p. 43.
 46. The icons were of Christ, the Virgin, and Saint Anastasia the Roman. See *Synaxarium ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae. Propylaeum ad Acta sanctorum Novembris*, ed. Hippolyte Delehaye (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1902), p. 828.19–22.
 47. See "Life of Lazaros of Galesion," ed. Hippolyte Delehaye, in *Acta Sanctorum Novembris*, vol. 3 (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1910), p. 514F, ch. 17.
 48. The testament of Michael Attaleiates refers several times to the motivation behind his patronage of a poorhouse and monastery: It was not for lack of an heir, but in thanksgiving to God for his education and accumulation of wealth. He notes that "the wealth of each man can serve as a ransom for his soul." Attaleiates also expresses his gratitude to God for having rescued him in battle against the Turks and Arabs and saving him from shipwreck. Finally, he begs God to forgive his countless sins. See Paul Gautier, "La Diataxis de Michel Attaliat," *Revue des études byzantines* 39 (1981), pp. 29, 31, 85, 87.
 49. See Denis F. Sullivan, *The Life of Saint Nikon* (Brookline, Mass.: Hellenic College Press, 1987), p. 230, ch. 67.40–43.
 50. See "De sacris aedibus deque miraculis Deiparae ad Fontem," in *Acta Sanctorum Novembris*, vol. 3 (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1910), p. 880C, ch. 8.
 51. *Ibid.*, p. 884D–E, ch. 21.
 52. *Ibid.*, p. 886A, ch. 29.
 53. See *Vita Euthymii patriarchae CP.*, ed. Patricia Karlin-Hayter (Brussels: Éditions de Byzantion, 1970), ch. 8, p. 51.14–20.
 54. See Paul Gautier, "La Diataxis de Michel Attaliat," *Revue des études byzantines* 39 (1981), pp. 87–89. See also Paul Gautier, "Le Typikon de la Théotokos Kécharitôménè," *Revue des études byzantines* 43 (1985), ch. 71, p. 125.1875–1877.
 55. See Louis Petit, "Typikon du monastère de la Kosmosoteira près d'Aenos (1152)," *Izvestiia Russkogo arkeologicheskogo instituta v Konstantinopole* 13 (1908), chapters 89–90, pp. 63–64; the English translation is by Nancy Ševčenko, in *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, eds. John P. Thomas and Angela C. Hero (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, forthcoming).
 56. See Jacques Lefort and Nicolas Oikonomides et al., *Actes d'Iviron*, vol. 2 (Paris: P. Lethielleux, 1990), no. 22, p. 4, no. 118, p. 8. The entire *synodikon* is summarized in French on pp. 4–11, with commentary on pp. 12–17.
 57. See Kurt Weitzmann and George Galavaris, *The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai. The Illuminated Greek Manuscripts*, vol. 1, *From the Ninth to the Twelfth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), no. 56, p. 140. The manuscript was rebound in Crete in the early sixteenth century.
 58. *Sinait. gr. 512*, an eleventh-century *menologion*, also was held by a series of monasteries. In the thirteenth century it was at the Lavra of Chariton; somewhat later, at the Monastery of Saint John the Baptist in the Jordan Valley; in 1291 it was seized by the Arabs who conquered Acre, and then bought back by a monk named Bessarion; and in the sixteenth century it was donated to Sinai. See *ibid.*, no. 27.
 59. See Sophronios Eustratiades, "Typikon tes en Konstantinoupolei Mones tou hagiou megalomartyros Mamantos," *Hellenika* 1 (1928), ch. 9, pp. 269–70. Similar procedures were followed at the Prodromos Monastery on Mount Menoikeion; see M. Jugie, "Le Typikon du monastère du Prodrome au Mont Ménécée, près de Serrès," *Byzantion* 12 (1937), pp. 43–44, ch. 5.
 60. See Paul Gautier, "Le Typikon de la Théotokos Kécharitôménè," *Revue des études byzantines* 43 (1985), ch. 77, p. 133. At the Monastery of Saint Mamas, the two original versions of the *typikon* and inventory were deposited for safekeeping in a locked and sealed box in the sacristy of the Philanthropos Monastery (where the abbot Athanasios had served as steward before becoming the superior of Saint Mamas), while a copy was retained at Saint Mamas; see Sophronios Eustratiades, "Typikon tes en Konstantinoupolei Mones tou hagiou megalomartyros Mamantos," *Hellenika* 1 (1928), p. 310.
 61. Paul Gautier, "Le Typikon de la Théotokos Kécharitôménè," *Revue des études byzantines* 43 (1985), ch. 20, p. 67.
 62. *Actes de Saint-Pantélémon*, ed. Paul Lemerle et al. (Paris: P. Lethielleux, 1982), no. 7, pp. 65–76.
 63. See Paul Gautier, "La Diataxis de Michel Attaliat," *Revue des études byzantines* 39 (1981), p. 129.
 64. See Nicolas Oikonomides, "The Holy Icon as an Asset," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 45 (1991), p. 37; see also the remarks of Ioli Kalavrezou-Maxeiner, in *Byzantine Icons in Seatite* (Vienna: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1985), pp. 73–79, esp. pp. 75–76, on adorned icons.
 65. The observations in this paragraph are based on analysis of the inventories of the monasteries of Attaleiates, Kecharitomene, and Pakourianos; see Paul Gautier, "La Diataxis de Michel Attaliat," *Revue des études byzantines* 39 (1981), pp. 85–99, 123–30; *idem*, "Le Typikon de la Théotokos Kécharitôménè," *Revue des études byzantines* 43 (1985), pp. 152–55; *idem*, "Le Typikon du Sébaste Grégoire Pakourianos," *Revue des études byzantines* 42 (1984), pp. 119–25.

66. See Paul Gautier, "Le Typikon de la Théotokos Evergétis," *Revue des études byzantines* 40 (1982), p. 63.
67. See Paul Gautier, "Le Typikon de la Théotokos Kécharitôménè," *Revue des études byzantines* 43 (1985), ch. 10, p. 47.
68. See Louis Petit, "Typikon du monastère de la Kosmosoteira près d'Aenos (1152)," *Izvestiia Russkogo arkheologicheskogo instituta v Konstantinopole* 13 (1908), ch. 109. The translation is by Nancy Ševčenko, in *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, eds. John P. Thomas and Angela C. Hero (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, forthcoming), p. 845.
69. See Hippolyte Delehaye, *Deux Typica byzantins de l'époque des Paléologues* (Brussels: M. Hayez, 1921), ch. 23, p. 118. See also the Kecharitimene *typikon*, which urged the *skeuophylakissa* (who was also the archivist) to take precautions against bookworms, and Paul Gautier, "Le Typikon de la Théotokos Kécharitôménè," *Revue des études byzantines* 43 (1985), ch. 19, p. 65.
70. See Spyridon Lampros, *Catalogue of the Greek Manuscripts on Mt. Athos*, vol. 1 (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1895), no. 1040, pp. 92–94.
71. See S. Pétridès, "Le Typikon de Nil Damilas pour le monastère de femmes de Baeonia en Crète (1400)," *Izvestiia Russkogo arkheologicheskogo instituta v Konstantinopole* 15 (1911), p. 109.17–19.
72. See Charles Diehl, "Le Trésor et la bibliothèque de Patmos au commencement du 13e siècle," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 1 (1892), pp. 503–4. Among the reasons are the negligence of monks, reuse of manuscript pages for new bindings, a liberal loan policy to other monasteries, and the sale of manuscripts to foreigners. On this inventory, see Charles Astruc, "L'Inventaire dressé en septembre 1200 du trésor et de la bibliothèque de Patmos. Edition diplomatique," *Travaux et mémoires* 8 (1981), pp. 15–30.
73. For example, such a curse is found at the end of the Evergetis *typikon*; see Paul Gautier, "Le Typikon de la Théotokos Evergétis," *Revue des études byzantines* 40 (1982), p. 95. A more elaborate curse is found in the colophon to Sinait. gr. 221, a twelfth-century lectionary, originally donated to the Nunnery of the Theotokos Eleousa outside Heraklion: "He who would attempt to take it away from this monastery by persuasion or by force . . . or to cut and take away a quaternium, a leaf, or a headpiece, whosoever, may he be cast away from the Christians just as Judas was from the group of the twelve; may he not be deemed worthy to gaze at the light of the Holy Trinity. He will also have the curses of our holy Fathers who have slept for centuries and the anathema of the lord, God Pantocrator, and in the day of judgment and revelation may he not receive help from the Mother of God." See Kurt Weitzmann and George Galavaris, *The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai. The Illuminated Greek Manuscripts*, vol. 1, *From the Ninth to the Twelfth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), no. 63, p. 177.

The *Panagiarion* of Alexios Komnenos Angelos and Middle Byzantine Painting

“The Glory of Byzantium” exhibition at The Metropolitan Museum of Art revealed that a uniform aesthetic and a monolithic style characterized Middle Byzantine art (843–1261). Within the wide range of Middle Byzantine art forms, it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to identify some as of major and others of minor significance. In Byzantium, even the marble inlay decorating walls and floors was a “high art.” We must bear this in mind when we consider Byzantine works of art, because their size, technique, and/or medium often have led art historians to categorize them as examples of the “minor arts.” Unfortunately, dating these works frequently is problematic, as few of them bear historical inscriptions. Among works carved in steatite, only the *panagiarion* of Alexios Komnenos Angelos (a small liturgical paten decorated with a representation of the Theotokos [Mother of God]) has such a historical inscription (fig. 1); the mention of Alexios Komnenos Angelos provides a secure basis for dating the *panagiarion*, and thereby enables us to use it as a standard for dating other steatite works.

This very small steatite paten, turquoise in color, is in the form of a lobed bowl which resembles an inverted, ribbed dome. It is dec-

orated with a medallion of the Theotokos and Child, inscribed ΜΡ ΘΥ Η ΠΑΝΑΓΙΑ, surrounded by bust-length representations of eleven Old Testament prophets and the patriarch Jacob. Dodecasyllabic verses ring the border of the medallion with the Theotokos and Child and also the images of the prophets and patriarch depicted on the *panagiarion*’s outer rim.¹

The inscription around the Theotokos and Child reads:²

+ ΑΝΑΝΔΡΕ ΜΗΤΕΡ ΠΑΡΘΕΝΕ
ΒΡΕΦΟΤΡΟΦΕ • ΚΟΜΝΗΝΟΝ
ΑΛΕΞΙΟΝ ΑΓΓΕΛΟΝ ΣΚΕΠΟΙΣ.
(Husbandless Mother, Infant-nourishing
Virgin/
protect Komnenos Alexios Angelos).

The following inscription encircles the prophets and patriarch:³

+ ΛΕΙΜΩΝ ΦΥΤΑ ΤΕ ΚΑΙ
ΤΡΙΚΑΚΤΙΝΟΝ ΣΕΛΑC. ΛΕΙΜΩΝ Ο
ΛΙΘΟΣ ΦΥΤΑ ΚΗΡΥΚΩΝ ΦΑΛΑΓΞ.
ΤΡΙΑ ΤΡΙΚΑΚΤΙΗ Χ(ΠΙCΤΟ)C,
ΑΡΤΟΣ, ΠΑΡΘΕΝΟC ΚΟΡΗ
ΔΑΝΕΙΖΕΙ CΑΡΚΑ ΤΩ Θ(ΕΟ)Υ
ΛΟΓΩ ΑΡΤΩ Δ’ Ο Χ(ΠΙCΤΟ)C
ΠΡΟCΝΕΜΕΙ C(ΩΤΗ)ΡΙΑΝ
ΚΟΜΝΗΝ’ ΑΓΓΕΛΩ ΚΑΙ ΡΩCΙΝ
ΑΛΕΞΙΩ.

(The meadow and the plants and the light
with three rays./

The stone is a meadow and the row of
prophets are the plants./

The three beams are Christ, the bread and
the Virgin./

The maiden lends flesh to the word of God, /
and Christ by means of bread distributes
salvation/

to Komnenos Angelos and strength to
Alexios).



Figure 1. *Panagiaron* of Alexios Komnenos Angelos. Byzantine, second half of the 12th century. Carved steatite: Diameter, 9 cm; height, 1 cm. Formerly, Monastery of Saint Panteleemon, Mount Athos (lost since the late 19th century) (Photo: Archives, The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg)

In addition, legends identify each prophet and the patriarch Jacob, all of whom hold scrolls upon which are inscribed the following texts:⁴

Ο ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ ΔΑΔ:

ΑΝΑΤΗΘΙ ΚΕ ΕΙΣ ΤΗΝ
ΑΝΑΠΑΥΣΙΝ COV

(Prophet David:

Arise, O Lord, into thy rest
[Psalms 131: 8]).

Ο ΣΟΦΟΣ ΣΟΛΟΜΩΝ:

ΙΔΟΥ Η ΚΛΙΝΗ ΤΟΥ ΣΑΛΟΜΟΝ
ΕΞΗΚΟΝΤΑ

(Wise Solomon:

Behold the bed of Solomon; threescore
[valiant men are about it] [Canticle of
Canticles 3: 7]).

Ο ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ ΙΕΖΕΚΙΗΛ:

Ο ΗΓΟΥΜΕΝΟΣ ΟΥΤΟΣ
ΚΑΘΗ(ΣΕ)ΤΑΙ ΕΝ ΑΥΤΗΙ ΤΟΥ

(Prophet Ezekiel:

The prince himself shall sit in it
[Ezekiel 44: 3]).

Ο ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ ΑΒΑΚΟΥΜ:

ΗΞΕΙ Ο ΑΓΙΟΣ ΕΞ ΟΡΩΣ
ΚΑΤΑΚΙΣ ΔΑΣΕΩΣ

(Prophet Habakkuk:

The Holy One will come from a shady
and wooded mountain [(Habakkuk 3: 3]).

Ο ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ ΔΑΝΙΗΛ:

ΕΤΜΗΘΗ ΛΙΘΟΣ ΑΠΟ ΟΡΩΣ ΑΝΕΥ
ΧΕΙΡΩΝ

(Prophet Daniel:

A stone was cut from the mountain with-
out hands [Daniel 2: 34]).

Ο ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ ΜΑΛΑΧΙΑΣ:

ΙΔΩ Κ(ΥΡΙΟ)Σ ΚΑΘΗΤΑΙ ΕΠΙ
ΝΕΦΕΛΗΣ ΚΩΦΗΣ

(Prophet Malachi:

Behold, the Lord rideth upon a swift
cloud [Isaiah 19: 1]).

Ο ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ ΙΕΡΕΜΙΑΣ:

ΕΚ ΟΣ ΜΟΙ ΕΞΕΛΕΥCΕΤΑΙ
ΗΓΟΥΜΕΝΟΣ

(Prophet Jeremiah:

Out of these shall come forth unto me a
ruler [Micah 5: 2 and Matthew 2: 6]).

Ο ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ ΗΣΑΙΑΣ:

ΙΔΩ Η ΠΑΡΘΕΝΟΣ ΕΝ ΓΑΤΡΙ ΕΞΕΙ
ΚΑΙ ΤΕΞ(Ε)ΤΑΙ

(Prophet Isaiah:

Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear [a
son] [Isaiah 7: 14]).

Ο ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ ΣΟΦΟΝΙΑΣ:

ΕΠΑΝΑΠΑ/CΕΤΑΙ ΕΠ' ΑΤΗΝ
ΙΝ(ΕΥΜ)Α ΔΥΝΑΜ(ΕΩ)C

(Prophet Sophonias:

A spirit of strength shall rest upon her
[Isaiah 11: 2]).

Ο ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ ΖΑΧΑΡΙΑΣ:

ΧΑΙΡΕ ΣΦΟΔΡΑ ΘΥΓΑΤΕΡ ΔΑ(ΥΙ)Δ

(Prophet Zacharias:

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of David
[Zacharias 9: 9; on the *panagiarion*,
“daughter of David” replaces “daughter
of Sion”]).

Ο ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ ΜΩΥΣΗΣ:

ΠΑΝ ΑΡCΕΝ ΔΙΑΝΟΙΓΟΝ ΜΗΤΡΑΝ
ΑΓΙ(Α)C ΟΝ Κ(ΥΡΙ)Ω

(Prophet Moses:

O Lord, bless every male that openeth the
womb [based on Luke 2: 23 and Exodus
13: 12]).

Ο ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΗΣ ΙΑΚΩΒ:

ΤΩΣ ΟΙΚΟΣ Θ(ΕΟ)Υ ΚΑΙ Α'ΤΗ Η ΠΥΛΗ Δ
Σ(ΡΑ)ΝΩ

(Patriarch Jacob:

The house of God, and the gate of heaven
[Genesis 28: 17]).

Until the end of the nineteenth century,
the *panagiarion* belonged to the Monastery of
Saint Panteleemon on Mount Athos, and it
has not been seen by scholars since that time.

Considered a Constantinopolitan work of high quality, it was reportedly in good condition. The small size and mobility of the *panagiaron* account for the difficulty in establishing its provenance, and the circumstances under which it arrived at Mount Athos remain unknown, as well. In 1845, the Russian scholar Porfirii Uspenskii traveled to Mount Athos, where he reported seeing the *panagiaron* in the Koutlounousiou Monastery. He was the first to inspect the *panagiaron*, and included a drawing of it in his book on the history of Mount Athos.⁵ In the second half of the nineteenth century, the *panagiaron* was moved to the Panteleemon Monastery on Mount Athos, where, at the end of the nineteenth century, Dmitrii V. Ainalov and Nikodim P. Kondakov studied this unique object. Ainalov analyzed its unusual iconographical features—for example, the composition of the Theotokos surrounded by prophets, and the headdress of the prophet Moses⁶—and Kondakov dated the *panagiaron* to the reign of Emperor Alexios III Angelos (1195–1203).⁷

Kondakov's dating of the *panagiaron* remained unchallenged for many years, and even the greatest Russian specialist in Byzantine decorative arts, Alisa Bank, was unequivocally in agreement.⁸ Then, in 1985, Ioli Kalavrezou made it known that she considered the *panagiaron* to be a work of the fourteenth century. According to Kalavrezou, the *panagiaron* was made for the emperor of Trebizond, Alexios III Komnenos (r. 1349–90).⁹ Her attribution, however, failed to take various historical facts into account, and the extant monuments associated with Alexios III Komnenos hardly provide supporting evidence. In a recent article, I addressed the shortcomings of Kalavrezou's argument, and defended the late-twelfth-century date for the *panagiaron*, suggesting that the individual referred to in the inscription is the Alexios Komnenos who was a descendent of the Angelos family and a patron of the Church of Saint Panteleemon in Nerezi in Macedonia.¹⁰



Figure 2. Funerary inscription of Isaac Komnenos. Byzantine, second half of the 12th century. Marble: 95 x 99 cm. Ecclesiastical Museum, Alexandroupolis, Greece (Byzantine Inscriptions, 17)

The *panagiaron* could not have been made for the emperor of Trebizond because the baptismal name of Alexios III Komnenos, then the emperor of Trebizond, was John. He was born on October 5, 1338, and was the illegitimate son of Basil I Komnenos (r. 1332–40). In 1349, when John was twelve years old, he ascended to the throne of Trebizond, and took the name Alexios III in honor of Alexios I Komnenos (r. 1204–22), founder of the Trebizond dynasty. Alexios I Komnenos and his brother David Komnenos were the sons of Manuel; Manuel, in turn, was the son of the Byzantine emperor Andronikos I Komnenos (r. 1183–85), who

was dethroned by Isaac II Angelos (r. 1185–95 and 1203–4). Therefore, the branch of the Komnenos dynasty ruling in Trebizond viewed the Angeloi with resentment as the usurpers who deprived them of the Byzantine imperial throne.¹¹ Moreover, I have found no evidence that the Trebizond rulers ever identified themselves by both names.¹² On the contrary, surviving icons, manuscripts, seals, dedicatory inscriptions, and chrysobulls indicate that the title of preference was “Ὁ Μέγας Κομνηνὸς ὁ Βασιλεὺς καὶ Αὐτοκράτωρ” (“The Great Komnenos Basileus and Emperor”). According to Sergei P. Karpov, from the second half of the thirteenth century on, the title “The Great Komnenos” appeared on charters and documents from Trebizond, and was used consistently during the fourteenth through the fifteenth century.¹³ It may be seen on the chrysobull of Emperor Alexios III Komnenos to the Dionysiou Monastery on Mount Athos, as well as on the donor’s icon in this monastery.¹⁴ In short, such evidence casts doubt on Ioli Kalavrezou’s attribution of the *panagiarion* to Alexios III Komnenos.¹⁵

The donor’s name, incorporated in two inscriptions on the *panagiarion*, usually is transcribed as “Alexios Komnenos Angelos.” The precise transcriptions of the relevant segments of the inscriptions are as follows: “husbandless Mother, infant-nourishing Virgin, protect Komnenos Alexios Angelos”; and “Christ by means of bread distributes salvation to Komnenos Angelos and strength to Alexios.” The patrimonial names reflect the genealogy of the emperor Alexios III Angelos, who was the grandson of Theodora Komnene Porphyrogenete and Constantine Angelos. It is noteworthy that the inscriptions on the *panagiarion* do not incorporate imperial titles. My study of imperial dedicatory inscriptions on works of decorative art (for example, chalices and patens in the Treasury of San Marco in Venice as well as other ivory carvings, cameos, enamels, and silver reliquaries) indicates that the imperial titles αὐτοκράτωρ (*autokrator*, or emperor),

δεσπότης (*despotes*, or lord), and βασιλεὺς (*basileus*, or king) were used consistently.¹⁶ It is possible that the *panagiarion* was created between 1191 and 1195, when Alexios III Angelos was at the court of his brother, the emperor Isaac II Angelos, but before he himself became emperor by overthrowing and blinding Isaac II. However, as already stated, I believe that another member of the Komnenos-Angelos dynasty—Alexios Komnenos, a son of Theodora Komnene Porphyrogenete and Constantine Angelos, and the patron of Saint Panteleemon in Nerezi—commissioned the *panagiarion*. Both patrimonial names in the inscription, as well as the absence of an imperial title, suggest that he was the patron.¹⁷ Alexios’s name is not associated with a title in the dedicatory inscription in the Nerezi church.¹⁸ According to historical sources, Alexios and his brothers attended the local Church Council of 1166 in Constantinople convoked by Emperor Manuel I Komnenos (r. 1143–80) to resolve a controversy introduced by Demetrios of Lampe (fl. 1160s), a diplomat and secular theologian. According to Niketas Choniates (about 1155/57–1217), the emperor Manuel I Komnenos invited “all who enjoy studying divine dogma” to this council.¹⁹ The unique iconographical program of the Church of Saint Panteleemon in Nerezi, which reflects the theological debates of the local Church councils held in Constantinople between 1156 and 1176, confirms that Alexios Komnenos was well versed in contemporary theological issues.²⁰ Similarities in the complexity of the iconography, representation of theological dogma and symbols, refined aesthetic sensibility, high quality of workmanship, and Constantinopolitan style of the *panagiarion* and the Nerezi frescoes indicate that they originated in the same artistic milieu. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that they were produced on the initiative and under the patronage of a single individual.

However, a comparison of the donor inscriptions on the two works reveals certain differences. The inscription in the Nerezi

church reads: “The church of the holy and renowned great martyr Panteleemon was beautifully made with the aid of Lord Alexios Komnenos, son of Theodora Porphyrogenete, in the month of September, 13th indication, 1164, Ioannikos the monk being *hegoumenos* (superior of a monastery).” The inscription follows a standard formula used by members of the nobility in order to emphasize their close relationship to the imperial dynasty. In the poems contained in a Greek manuscript in Venice (Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, cod. 524), the author uses this formula to emphasize that Gudelos Tzikandeles was married to Theodora’s daughter, “who was of the porphyrogenetos branch of the family of Emperor Alexios.” In a poem commemorating Andronikos Synadenos in this manuscript, Theodora is described as “the daughter of a porphyrogenetos father, Alexios.” Thus, the youngest daughter of Emperor Alexios I Komnenos is mentioned in both poems as well as in the Nerezi inscription.²¹

Both the Komnenos and the Angelos patronymics command equal prominence on the *panagiarion*. This seems to imply that the *panagiarion* postdates 1185, the year in which Isaac II Angelos overthrew Andronikos I Komnenos and thus initiated a new dynasty. Isaac II Angelos was able to occupy the throne because of his Komnenian dynastic lineage. According to Niketas Choniates, the general populace viewed both Isaac II Angelos and his brother Alexios III Angelos as members of the Komnenian dynasty.²²

Unfortunately, there is little information in historical sources about Alexios Komnenos, which explains why he has been called “a patron without history.”²³ Nevertheless, the decoration of the Church of Saint Panteleemon in Nerezi, which he founded, is recognized universally as a masterpiece of twelfth-century Constantinopolitan painting.²⁴ Therefore, if the *panagiarion* actually was commissioned by Alexios Komnenos, it would constitute an important comparative work in the study of the Nerezi paintings



Figure 3. The Ascension. Illumination from the Homilies on the Life of the Virgin by James the Monk. Byzantine, about 1125–50. Tempera and gold on vellum: 33 x 32 cm. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City (Ms. Vat. gr. 1162, fol. 2v)

and of late-twelfth-century Byzantine art in general. Furthermore, even if it is found that the Alexios Komnenos Angelos referred to on the *panagiarion* is not, in fact, the patron of the Nerezi church, there is no reason to date the *panagiarion* to the Palaiologan period; analyses of the various features of the steatite work still argue in favor of a twelfth-century date.

The refined, poetic inscription on the *panagiarion* can be compared with the rich and colorful funerary inscription of the *sebastokrator* (the highest title after that of co-emperor



Figure 4. Icon of the Enthroned Theotokos and Child with Prophets and Saints. Byzantine, about 1080–1130. Tempera on panel: 48.5 x 41.2 cm. The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Mount Sinai

and later *despotes*, conferred on the emperor's sons and brothers) Isaac Komnenos (r. 1093–about 1152), in the Church of the Theotokos Kosmosoteira in Pherrai, founded before 1152 (fig. 2).²⁵ Both inscriptions employ literary *topoi* that would have been easily recognizable to twelfth-century Byzantine intellectuals. Sometimes, single key words could invite

associations with specific theological texts. For example, the simile of the flowering meadow finds many parallels in Middle Byzantine literature. In Niketas Choniates' *History*, the line, "The maiden lends flesh to the word of God," is a variant on an acrostic from the canon for the Presentation of the Virgin written by George of Nikomedeia (about 860),²⁶ which also resonates in the works of Symeon the Theologian (949–1022), in such lines as, "the Virgin with her intercessory prayers grants grace through the Only Son, the Logos Incarnate."²⁷ The epithet "βρεφοκρατούσα" probably can be related to the epithet "βρεφοτρόφος" often encountered in the canons for the feasts of the Virgin.²⁸ The designation "μήτερ παρθένε," in the *panagiarion* inscription, recalls the *ekphraseis* (formal descriptions) composed by Patriarch Photios (858–67 and 877–86), who, for example, described the image of the Theotokos in the sanctuary apse of the Cathedral of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople as "a virgin mother, with a virgin's and a mother's gaze."²⁹ Obviously, many more parallels can be drawn between the inscriptions on the *panagiarion* and Middle Byzantine literary works devoted to the Theotokos. Such similarities are not accidental. Heretical movements of the period repudiated doctrines that established connections between Old Testament prophecies and the New Testament, and the veneration of icons was being debated in philosophical circles.

In response to the theological debates and heated conflicts of the Church Councils of the period, a number of works depicting biblical Mariological scenes, including icons, manuscripts, and frescoes, were created from the eleventh through the twelfth century. Among the most important of these are the Homilies on the Life of the Virgin by James the Monk, of the Kokkinobaphos Monastery (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ms. Vat. gr. 1162; about 1125–50; fig. 3);³⁰ the Smyrna Physiologos (11th century);³¹ the Icon of the Enthroned Theotokos, with Prophets and Saints, from the Holy Monastery

of Saint Catherine on Mount Sinai (about 1080–1130; fig. 4),³² and an icon of the same subject in The State Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg (late 12th century; fig. 5);³³ the silver cover of the Icon of the Theotokos Myrelaiotissa, in the collection of the Greek Patriarchate in Jerusalem;³⁴ the silver revetment of the twelfth-century Icon of the Theotokos, from an Annunciation diptych in the Church of Saint Kliment in Ohrid in Macedonia (fig. 6);³⁵ the Icon of the Bogoroditsa (Theotokos) Belozerskaia, in Saint Petersburg;³⁶ a number of icons depicting the Theotokos with prophets, in the Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine on Mount Sinai (11th–12th century);³⁷ the frescoes in the church in Betani in Georgia (12th–13th century);³⁸ and the *panagiarion* carved of heliotrope, in the Hilandar Monastery on Mount Athos (11th century).³⁹ These works reveal that eleventh- and twelfth-century artists were well acquainted with the iconography of the Theotokos surrounded by prophets, which, although based on literary sources, had not yet assumed the strict canonical form dictated by the *Hermeneia* (*Painter's Manual*) of Dionysios of Phourna (about 1730s).⁴⁰

The inscriptions on the scrolls held by the prophets on the *panagiarion* are not those traditionally selected as representative of their books. The Old Testament citations appear to have been chosen on the basis of their inclusion in the Akathistos Hymn (sung in honor of the Theotokos), and in the canons for such feasts as the Annunciation, the Birth of the Virgin, the Presentation of the Virgin, the Koimesis, the Nativity, the Hypapante, and the Entry into Jerusalem.⁴¹ Thus, each scroll is inscribed with an Old Testament text probably taken from a hymn associated with a feast celebrating the Theotokos. While, as a group, the inscriptions on the *panagiarion* are not repeated on any extant Byzantine work, individual inscriptions find parallels on eleventh- and twelfth-century monuments as, for example in the Emali Kilise in the Görome valley in Cappadocia, of 1020–1130; the



Figure 5. Icon of the Enthroned Theotokos and Child with Prophets and Saints. Byzantine, late 12th century. Tempera on panel: 48 x 36.8 cm. The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg

Cappella Palatina in Palermo, of 1140–48; Santa Maria dell'Ammiraglio (La Martorana) in Palermo, of about 1143–51; and the Basilica of San Marco in Venice, 12th century.⁴² The appearance of inscriptions on these structures supports a twelfth-century date for the *panagiarion*.

A widespread interest in hymnography characterized the Middle Byzantine period and gave rise to the inclusion of portraits of



Figure 6. Icon of the Theotokos, from an Annunciation diptych in the Church of Saint Kliment, Ohrid, Macedonia. Byzantine, 12th century. Tempera on panel: 111.5 x 68 cm. The National Museum, Ohrid, Macedonia

famous Byzantine practitioners of the art, such as Kosmas the Hymnographer (about 675–about 752), John of Damascus (about 675–749), Theodore of Studios (759–826), Theophanes Graptos (about 778–845), George of Nikomedeia (about 860), and Joseph the Hymnographer (812/18–886) in the decoration of churches.⁴³ Images of hymnographers constitute an important component of the fresco cycle in the Church of Saint Panteleemon in Nerezi,⁴⁴ and Kosmas the Hymnographer and John of Damascus are depicted in the fragmentarily preserved twelfth-century wall painting of the Crucifixion, in the Church of Saints Nicholas and Panteleemon in Boiana in Bulgaria,⁴⁵ as well as alongside the fresco of the Koimesis in the double-church of the Petritzos Monastery in Bachkovo, also in Bulgaria.⁴⁶ The monuments cited, along with several other churches with images of hymnographers, served a funerary function; they were built or reconstructed specifically for burials.⁴⁷

The interest in hymnography also influenced icon painting. Much of the surface of the twelfth-century Icon of the Enthroned Theotokos, from an Annunciation diptych in the Church of Saint Kliment in Ohrid (see fig. 6), is covered by a silver revetment, with embossed images of the Deesis, ten prophets, and Joachim and Anna on the frame. The ten prophets hold scrolls inscribed with words by John of Damascus from the canon of the Annunciation. Many of the inscriptions refer to the troparia of the ninth ode, which contain Old Testament prophecies. Furthermore, the revetment also bears an inscription that refers to a donor named Leon, who may be the archbishop Leon (fl. mid–11th century) or Leon MOUNGOS, the archbishop of Ohrid (r. 1108–20). Most probably, the donor played a role in devising the iconographic program of the icon revetment,⁴⁸ and likewise, we can assume that the patron of the *panagiarion* influenced the decoration of the work he commissioned.

Two citations from the Old Testament that appear on the *panagiarion* deserve special attention: the words on Zacharias's scroll, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of David" (based on Zacharias 9: 9), and those on Ezekiel's scroll, "The prince himself shall sit in it" (Ezekiel 44: 3). According to biblical exegesis, the former of the two citations signifies that "the gentle emperor will rule not through the power of weapons, but through the spirit of the Lord." Discussions of the second inscription explain the word "prince" as a reference to the ruler of a theocratic state, rather than to the Messiah. It is very tempting to relate these selected Old Testament citations to the political situation in late-twelfth-century Byzantium—specifically, to the dethronement of the emperor Andronikos I Komnenos by Isaac II Angelos in 1185. The historian Niketas Choniates regarded the emperor Andronikos I Komnenos as a brutal tyrant and the rule of Isaac II Angelos as a "New Just Reign." He refers to the latter as the "new Moses," whom crowds gathered to see.⁴⁹ Of course, any political implications the inscriptions on the *panagiarion* may convey are subordinate to their theological significance.

The portrayal of the Theotokos and Child in the center of the *panagiarion* is also interesting. The Theotokos is shown in a frontal pose, holding in her arms the reclining Christ Child, dressed in a short tunic. The child's playful gestures contrast with the calmness of the Theotokos, who appears to be presenting her son as a sacrifice on our behalf. The accompanying inscriptions, "μήτηρ παρθένη" ("virgin mother") and "ἡ παναγία" ("all holy"), confirm such an interpretation, and relate the image to the *panagiarion*'s mystical use.

Kondakov recognized iconographic analogies for the Theotokos on the *panagiarion* in the reliefs decorating the exterior of the Basilica of San Marco, which he dated to the twelfth century, and in a mosaic in the Church of Santa Maria in Aracoeli in

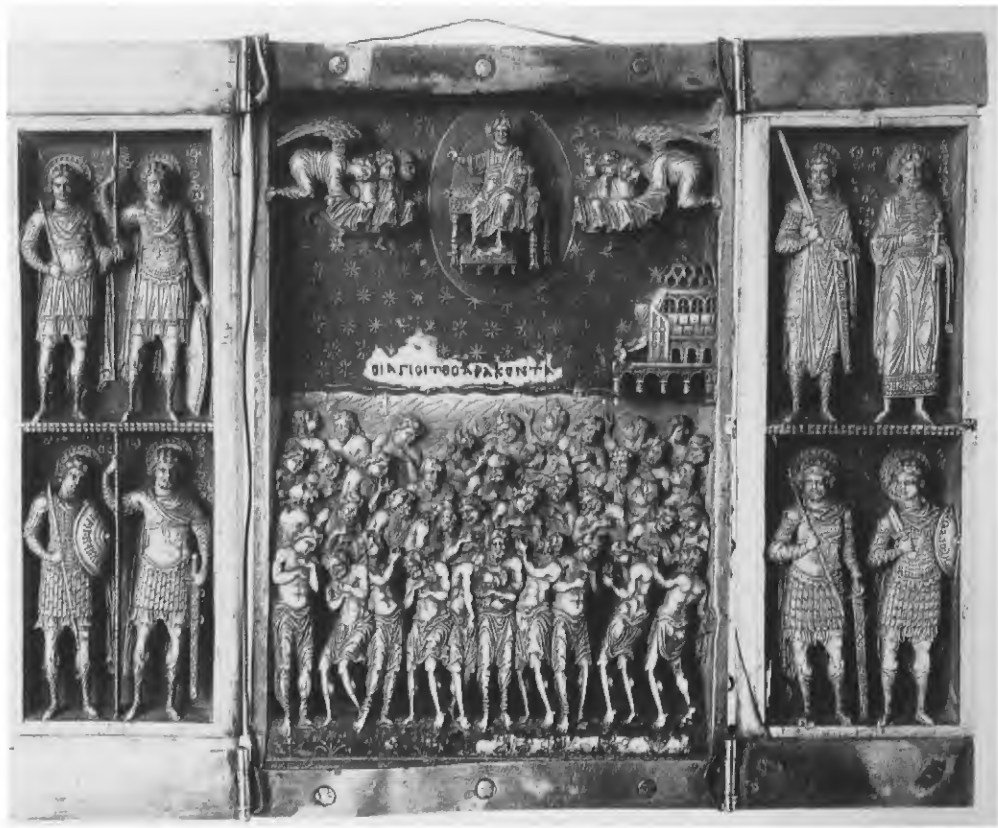


Figure 7. Triptych of the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste. Byzantine, early 11th century. Carved ivory: 18.5 x 24.2 cm. The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (Inv. no. ω 299)

Rome.⁵⁰ Now, this list can be expanded to include a fresco, dated to 1192, in the Church of the Panagia tou Arakos in Lagoudera on Cyprus;⁵¹ a late-twelfth/early-thirteenth-century icon from Nesebŭr now in Sofia, Bulgaria;⁵² a thirteenth-century diptych with Saint Prokopios and the Theotokos Kykkotissa, in the Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine on Mount Sinai; an early-twelfth-century icon of the Theotokos in Thessalonike;⁵³ and a fresco, dated to 1191, in the Church of Saint George in Kurbinovo, in Macedonia.⁵⁴ Such comparisons reveal that the portrayal of the Theotokos on the *panagiarion* finds close parallels in Middle Byzantine works of art.

Among Kalavrezou's reasons for dating the *panagiarion* to the fourteenth century was its carving style. According to her, "The figures are carved in rather high relief, creating rounded forms. The drapery patterns are created by double or triple tubes of folded material which give the impression of heavy garments."⁵⁵ Such a stylistic analysis, however, is equally fitting for many eleventh- and twelfth-century works of art—as for example, the early-eleventh-century ivory triptych of The Forty Martyrs of Sebaste, now in The State Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg (fig. 7).⁵⁶ Until David Talbot Rice attributed the triptych to the Middle Byzantine period on the basis of its style

and its inscriptions in imitation of Arabic writing,⁵⁷ it was considered to be a Palaiologan work.

Kalavrezou compares the figural styles of the *panagiarion* of Alexios Komnenos Angelos, the *panagiarion* from the Xeropotamou Monastery on Mount Athos, and three small steatite icons: the Icon of Saint Demetrios, in the State Historical and Cultural Museum “Moscow Kremlin” (fig. 8); the Icon of the Theotokos and Child with Two Hymnographers, in the British Museum in London; and the Icon of the Theotokos Hodegetria, in the Vatopedi Monastery on Mount Athos.⁵⁸ The dates of these works, however, have not been conclusively established. Various scholars attribute them to different periods—as, for example, Alisa Bank, who assigns the Icon of Saint Demetrios to the eleventh century and the Icon of the Theotokos and Child with Two Hymnographers to the late twelfth or early thirteenth century.⁵⁹ The iconographic analysis of the latter work, which reflects the characteristic twelfth-century interest in hymnography, supports Bank’s dating. The Icons of Saint Demetrios and of the Theotokos and Child with Two Hymnographers are closely related in date to the *panagiarion*; therefore, revisions in the dating of one of these works require comparable changes in the dating of the others.

Panagiaria, as their name implies, held the Panagia (the portion of the holy bread offered to the Theotokos) in the ceremony following dinner in the monastery. Originally, the ceremony consisted of the service and psalms performed for the sanctification of the panagia. According to Kondakov, the Byzantine imperial court appropriated this monastic ceremony in the tenth century.⁶⁰ Pseudo-Kodinos describes the courtly version of the ceremony in the *Treatise on Dignities and Offices* (compiled between 1347 and 1368):⁶¹ After dinner, when the tablecloth is removed, a domestic brings the bread on a *panagiarion*, and the emperor rises to his feet. A youth of imperial lineage approaches the bench on which the emperor stands in order



Figure 8. Icon of Saint Demetrios. Byzantine, 11th–12th century; frame, 14th century. Carved steatite with silver frame: 31.4 x 26.4 cm. The State Historical and Cultural Museum “Moscow Kremlin” (Inv. no. 16625)

to help support him. A dignitary then presents the *panagiarion* to a domestic, who passes it on to the head domestic, who, in turn, gives it to the emperor. When the emperor places a piece of the holy bread from the *panagiarion* in his mouth everyone present begins to sing.⁶² The Russian tsars adopted this ceremony, continuing to practice it until the end of the seventeenth century, and, according to historical sources, not only the Russian tsars and other rulers but also Byzantine nobility—especially those nobles related to the imperial family—imitated imperial court customs with a splendor that frequently provoked the envy of the emperor himself.

Alexios Komnenos commissioned a painter from Constantinople to decorate his funerary church in Nerezi. Therefore, it



Figure 9. The Lamentation (detail). Fresco. Byzantine, about 1164. Church of Saint Panteleemon in Nerezi, Macedonia (Photo: Archives, The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg)

would not have been unusual for him to have acquired a precious *panagiarion* made in a court workshop in the capital. While the highly refined quality of the carving clearly indicates that the *panagiarion* was produced in such a court workshop, the precise purpose for which it was made is much more difficult to establish. Its patron might have commissioned the *panagiarion* as a gift to a monastery (maybe even the monastery of Saint Panteleemon in Nerezi), but it is also possible that he intended it for personal use.

Careful consideration of the iconographic and stylistic features of the *panagiarion* reveals that it is a work from the late twelfth century. The inscriptions and the iconography, with their Old Testament and literary sources; the figural and carving style; and the probable identity of the patron, as well as the

similarities among the *panagiarion* and other works commissioned by this same individual, all support a dating to the Late Komnenian period, when the nobility actively served as patrons of monasteries. Some of these monasteries were burial sites for members of the Komnenian dynasty (for example, the Pantokrator Monastery in Constantinople, of about 1136; the Kosmosoteira Monastery in Pherrai in Greece, of about 1152; the Church of Saint Panteleemon in Nerezi, of about 1164; the Pammakaristos Monastery in Constantinople, from the 12th century; and the Church of the Virgin, at the Studenica Monastery in Serbia, of about 1183).⁶³ The Late Komnenian period also was characterized by the introduction and popularity of new liturgical services commemorating the Passion of Christ and the Lamentation, which

were celebrated at the monasteries patronized by the imperial nobility. Furthermore, the role and iconography of the Theotokos was changing, acquiring new liturgical connotations. The tragic, sacrificial aspects of her life were emphasized,⁶⁴ as in the well-known fresco of the Lamentation, in the Church of Saint Panteleemon in Nerezi (fig. 9). The iconographic and stylistic features of the *panagiarion* of Alexios Komnenos Angelos, an outstanding twelfth-century Byzantine work of art, can best be explained in the context of all of these developments.

1. The inscriptions were first published by Nikodim P. Kondakov and Nikolai V. Malitskii. These scholars actually saw the *panagiarion* itself. See Nikodim P. Kondakov, *Pamiatniki khristianskogo iskusstva na Afone* (Saint Petersburg: Tipografia Imperatorskoi Akademii nauk, 1902), pp. 222–25; Nikolai V. Malitskii, “Panagiar Afonskogo monastiria Russik (Sv. Panteleimona),” in *Vizantiia i vizantiiskie traditsii. Sbornik nauchnikh trudov* (Saint Petersburg: 1996), pp. 192–200.
2. On the inscriptions as reproduced here see Ioli Kalavrezou-Maxeiner, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite*, Byzantina Vindobonensia 15 (Vienna: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1985), p. 206. This scholar recorded the inscriptions from photographs and never actually saw the *panagiarion*. (The editor of this volume has made the decision to publish the inscriptions as they appear in Ioli Kalavrezou-Maxeiner’s work.)
3. Ibid. I have made some minor adjustments in the translation.
4. Ibid., pp. 207–8.
5. See Porfirii Uspenskii, *Pervoe putesthestvie v Afonskie monasterii i skiti v 1845 godu* (Kyiv: Tip. V. L. Frontskevicha, 1877), part 2.2, pp. 197–98.
6. See Dmitrii V. Ainalov, “Vizantiiskie pamiatniki Afona, 3, Artostnitsa riznitsy Panatelimonovskago monastiria,” *Vizantiiskii vremennik* 6 (1899), pp. 73–74.
7. See Nikodim P. Kondakov, *Pamiatniki khristianskogo iskusstva na Afone* (Saint Petersburg: Tipografia Imperatorskoi Akademii nauk, 1902), pp. 222–25, pl. 31.
8. See Alisa Bank, *Prikladnoe iskusstvo Vizantii IX–XII vv. Materialy i issledovaniia: Ocherki* (Moscow: 1978), pp. 90–91, 104.
9. See Ioli Kalavrezou-Maxeiner, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite*, Byzantina Vindobonensia 15 (Vienna: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1985), no. 132, pp. 46, 83, 87, 206–8.
10. See Yuri Piatnitskii [Piatnitsky], “K probleme atributsii panagiara Alekseia Komnina Angela,” in *Iskusstvo Rusi i stran vizantiiskogo mira XII veka: Tezisy dokladov konferentsii, Moskva, Sentiabr’ 1995*, ed. O. E. Etingof (Saint Petersburg: Dmitrii Bulanin, 1995), pp. 18–19; *idem*, “Aleksei Angel Komnin—zakazchik panagiara, khranivshegosia v Panteleimonovskom monastire na Afone” and “Posleslovie k statie N.V. Malitskogo ‘Panagiar Afonskogo monastiria Russik (Sv. Panteleimona),’” in *Vizantiia i vizantiiskie traditsii. Sbornik nauchnikh trudov* (Saint Petersburg: 1996), pp. 75–84, 201–8; *idem*, “Steatitovii panagiar iz monastiria sv. Panteleimona na Afone i ego zakazchik Aleksei Komnin Angel,” in *Drevnerusskoe iskusstvo* (in press).
11. See Fedor I. Uspenskii, *Ocherki iz istorii Trapezuntskoi imperii* (Leningrad [Saint Petersburg]: 1929), pp. 76–78; Sergei P. Karpov, “Trapezundskaia imperiia i Afon,” *Vizantiiskii vremennik* 45 (1984), pp. 95–101.
12. In the prosopography of the Palaiologos family published by the Austrian Academy, the inclusion of “Angelos” among Alexios III’s patrimonial names reflects the marriages between the Komnenos and Palaiologos families, rather than a name that he actually used. From the twelfth century on, the Palaiologoi were closely related to the Angeloi. See Erich Trapp et al., *Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit* (Vienna: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1981), vol. 5, no. 12083.
13. See Sergei P. Karpov, “U istokov politicheskoi ideologii Trapezuntskoi imperii. (O proiskhozhdenii titula “ΜΕΓΑΣ ΚΟΜΝΗΝΟΣ),” *Vizantiiskii vremennik* 42 (1981), pp. 101–5.
14. See *Stranstvovaniia Vasil’ia Grigorovicha-Barskogo po sviatim mestam Vostoka s 1723 po 1747 g.* (Saint Petersburg: 1887), part 3, pp. 374–87; Gabriel Millet, Jeanne Fourier-Pargoire, and Louis-David Petit, *Recueil des inscriptions chrétiennes de l’Athos* (Paris: A. Fontemoing, 1904), pp. 168–69; Nicolas Oikonomides, *Actes de Dionysiou. Texte* (Paris: P. Lethielleux, 1968), p. 26; Sergei P. Karpov, “Trapezundskaia imperiia i Afon,” *Vizantiiskii vremennik* 45 (1984), p. 99; Athanasios A. Karakatsanis, ed., *The Treasures of Mount Athos* (Thessalonike: Ministry of Culture, Museum of Byzantine Culture, 1997), pp. 91–99, 446–47.
15. See Yuri Piatnitskii [Piatnitsky], “Posleslovie k statie N.V. Malitskogo ‘Panagiar Afonskogo monastiria Russik (Sv. Panteleimona),’” in *Vizantiia i vizantiiskie traditsii. Sbornik nauchnikh trudov* (Saint Petersburg: 1996), pp. 201–9. This article is an addendum to Nikolai V. Malitskii, “Panagiar Afonskogo monastiria Russik (Sv. Panteleimona),” in *Vizantiia i vizantiiskie traditsii. Sbornik nauchnikh trudov* (Saint Petersburg: 1996), pp. 192–200. Although Malitskii’s article was written in 1926, it was not published until 1996. According to Malitskii, the *panagiarion* does not pre-date the fifteenth century, and Alexios Komnenos Angelos, the patron of the *panagiarion*, should be

- identified as a member of the Trapezuntine branch of the Komnenos family. Malitskii knew of no parallels for the Christ Child, or for the composition of the Theotokos and Child surrounded by prophets, among twelfth-century Byzantine art works. In my article, I show that all the iconographic features specified by Malitskii find analogies in Byzantine art of the twelfth through the thirteenth century.
16. See *The Treasury of San Marco, Venice*, ed. David Buckton (New York and Milan: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1984), nos. 10, 11, 25; *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, eds. Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), nos. 36, 89, 90, 126, 138, 140, 167.
 17. See Georgij Ostrogorski, *Zur byzantinischen Geschichte* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1973), pp. 170–73; K. Barzos, *He Genealogia ton Komnenon* (Thessalonike: 1984), pp. 654–55.
 18. See Nikodim P. Kondakov, *Makedoniia. Arkeologicheskoe puteshestvie* (Saint Petersburg: Tipografiia Imperatorskoi Akademii nauk, 1909), p. 174.
 19. See Nikita Khoniati, *Istoriia. Tsarstvovanie Manuila Komnina* (Saint Petersburg: 1860), vol. 1, book 7, p. 275.
 20. Ida Sinkević, “Alexios Angelos Komnenos, a patron without history?,” *Gesta* 35, no. 1 (1996), pp. 34–41.
 21. See S. Shestakov, “Zametki k stikhotvoreniim codicis Marciani gr. 524,” *Vizantiiskii vremennik* 24 (1926), pp. 45–56.
 22. See Nikita Khoniati, *Istoriia. Tsarstvovanie Manuila Komnina* (Saint Petersburg: 1860), vol. 2, book 1, pp. 141–42, 147.
 23. See Ida Sinkević, “Alexios Angelos Komnenos, a patron without history?,” *Gesta* 35, no. 1 (1996), p. 34.
 24. See Petar Miljković-Pepok, *Nerezi* (Belgrade: Jugoslavija, 1966); Vojislav J. Djurić, *Vizantijske freske u Jugoslaviji* (Belgrade: Jugoslavija, 1974), pp. 12–14, 28, 182–83.
 25. See Robert Ousterhout, “Funerary Inscription Attributed to Isaac Komnenos,” in *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, eds. Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), no. 7, pp. 40–41.
 26. See E. Loviagin, *Bogosluzhebnie kanoni na slavianskom i ruskom iazikakh* (Leningrad [Saint Petersburg]: 1975), p. 173.
 27. See Arkhiepiskop Vasilii Krivoshein, *Prepodobnyi Simeon novyi bogoslov (949–1022)* (Paris: YMCA-Press, 1980), pp. 279, 287.
 28. See Nikodim P. Kondakov, *Ikonografiia Bogomateri* (Petrograd [Saint Petersburg]: Tipografiia Imperatorskoi Akademii nauk, 1915), vol. 2, pp. 254–56.
 29. See Cyril Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire 312–1453: Sources and Documents*, Medieval Academy Reprints for Teaching 16 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press in association with the Medieval Academy of America, 1986), p. 187.
 30. See Jeffrey C. Anderson, “Homilies on the Life of the Virgin by James the Monk,” in *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, eds. Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), no. 62, pp. 107–9.
 31. See Otto Demus, “Bemerkungen zum Physiologus von Smirna,” *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 25 (1976), pp. 235–57.
 32. See Annemarie Weyl Carr, “Icon with the Enthroned Virgin Surrounded by Prophets and Saints,” in *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, eds. Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), no. 244, pp. 372–73.
 33. See Olga E. Etingof, “Ermitazhnyi pamiatnik vizantiiskoi zhivopisi kontsa XII veka (Stil’ i ikonografiia),” in *Vostochnoe Sredizemnomor’e i Kavkaz IV–XVI vv.* (Leningrad [Saint Petersburg]: Iskusstvo, 1988), pp. 141–59; Yuri Piatnitskii [Piatnitsky], “Zhivopis’ Afona,” in *Afonskie drevnosti: katalog vystavki iz fondov Ermitazha* (Saint Petersburg: Gos Ermitazh, 1992), no. 4, pp. 24–25.
 34. See Paul Huber, *Die Kunstschatze der Heiligen Berge: Sinai, Athos, Golgota* (Augsburg: Patloch, 1987), pl. 28.
 35. See Vojislav J. Djurić, *Icônes de Yougoslavie* (Belgrade: Jugoslavija, 1961), no. 20.
 36. See Viktor N. Lazarev, *Russkaia ikonopis’ ot istokov do nachala XVI veka* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1983), no. 11; Tatiana B. Vilinbakhova, “Ob ikone ‘Bogomater’ Umilenie (Belozerskaia),” in *Iskusstvo Rusi: Vizantiia i Balkan XIII veka* (Saint Petersburg: Dmitrii Bulanin 1994), pp. 40–41.
 37. See Georgios and Maria Sotiriou, *Eikones tes mones Sina*, vol. 1, *Eikones* (Athens: Institut français d’Athènes, 1956), figs. 157, 158, 171; Kurt Weitzmann et al., *The Icon* (New York: Knopf, 1982), pp. 218, 228.
 38. See Ekaterina L. Privalova, “Novie dannie o Betanii,” in *IV-e Symposium International sur l’art Géorgien* (Tbilisi: 1983), pp. 10–11.
 39. See Bojana Radojković, *Les Objets sculptés d’art mineur en Serbie ancienne* (Belgrade: 1977), p. 12, pl. 7.
 40. See Denys de Fournas, *Manuel d’iconographie chrétienne grecque et latine* (Saint Petersburg: 1909), pp. 146, 282.
 41. See E. Loviagin, *Bogosluzhebnie kanoni na slavianskom i ruskom iazikakh* (Leningrad [Saint Petersburg]: 1975), pp. 1–17, 35–65, 126–92, 255–67.
 42. See Anne-Mette Gravgaard, *Inscriptions of Old Testament Prophecies in Byzantine Churches* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum, 1979), pp. 23, 33, 45, 51, 54, 76, 80, 89.
 43. See André Grabar, “Les Images des poètes et des illustrations dans leurs œuvres dans la peinture byzantine tardive,” *Zograf* 10 (1979), p. 16; Annemarie Weyl Carr, “Illuminated Musical Manuscripts in Byzantium: A Note on the Late Twelfth Century,” *Gesta* 28, no. 1 (1989), pp. 41–53.
 44. See Ida Sinkević, “Alexios Angelos Komnenos, a patron without history?,” *Gesta* 35, no. 1 (1996), pp. 36–37, figs. 2, 5.
 45. See Elka Bakalova, “Die Konstantinopelschen

- Modelle in der Kirche von Bojana," *Problemi na izkusstvo* 1 (1995), pp. 10–21.
46. See Elka Bakalova, *Bachkovskata kostnica* (Sofia: Bulgarski khudozhnik, 1977), pp. 81–85, figs. 61–65.
 47. See Biserka Penkova, "Von der Kommemorativen Funktion der Kapelle im zweitea Stock der Kirche von Bojana," *Problemi na izkusstvo* 1 (1995), pp. 29–41; *idem*, "Km programmata na stenopisite ot XII vek v Boianskata c'rkva," in *Iskusstvo Rusi i stran Vizantiiskogo mira XII veka* (Saint Petersburg: Dmitrii Bulanin, 1995), pp. 9–12.
 48. See Vojislav J. Djurić, *Icônes de Yougoslavie* (Belgrade: Jugoslavija, 1961), nos. 20, 21; Svetozar Radojčić, "Zur Geschichte des silbergetriebenen Reliefs in der byzantinischen Kunst," in *Tortulae*, Römische Quartalschrift 30, Supplement Heft (1966), pp. 231–32.
 49. See Nikita Khoniati, *Istoriia Tsarstvovanie Manuila Komnina* (Saint Petersburg: Tipografiia Imperatorskoi Akademii nauk, 1860), vol. 2, book 1, pp. 1–3.
 50. See Nikodim P. Kondakov, *Ikonografiia Bogomateri* (Petrograd [Saint Petersburg]: Tipografiia Imperatorskoi Akademii nauk, 1915), vol. 2, pp. 253–59.
 51. See Andreas Stylianou and Judith A. Stylianou, *The Painted Churches of Cyprus. Treasures of Byzantine Art* (London: Trigraph [for the A. G. Leventis Foundation], 1985), pp. 157–85, fig. 85.
 52. Kostadinka G. K. Paskaleva, "Trois Icônes de Nesebăr du XIII-e siècle," *Byzantinobulgaria* 7 (1981), pp. 369–74.
 53. See Kurt Weitzmann et al., *The Icon* (New York: Knopf, 1982), pp. 179, 227.
 54. See Lydie Hadermann-Misguich, *Kurbinovo: Les Fresques de Saint-Georges et la peinture byzantine du XII-e siècle*, Bibliothèque de Byzantion 6 (Brussels: Éditions de Byzantion, 1975), pl. A.
 55. See Ioli Kalavrezou-Maxeiner, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite*, Byzantina Vindobonensia 15 (Vienna: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1985), p. 208.
 56. See Alisa Bank, *Byzantine Art in the Collections of Soviet Museums*, trans. Lenina Sorokina (New York and Leningrad [Saint Petersburg]: Aurora, 1978), p. 294, figs. 123–27.
 57. See David Talbot Rice, "The Ivory of the Forty Martyrs at Berlin and the Art of the Twelfth Century," in *Mélanges G. Ostrogorsky*, ed. Franjo Barisic, Zbornik radova, book 8 (Belgrade: Vizantoloski institut, Srpska akademija nauka i umetnosti, 1963), pp. 275–79.
 58. See Ioli Kalavrezou-Maxeiner, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite*, Byzantina Vindobonensia 15 (Vienna: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1985), no. 124, pp. 126, 131, 134.
 59. See Alisa Bank, *Prikladnoe iskusstvo Vizantii IX–XII vv. Materialy i issledovaniia: Ocherki* (Moscow: 1978), pp. 97–98, 103–4.
 60. See Nikodim P. Kondakov, *Pamiatniki khristianskogo iskusstva na Afone* (Saint Petersburg: Tipografiia Imperatorskoi Akademii nauk, 1902), pp. 229–33. On panagiaria see also Fedor I. Uspenskii, "O panagii artosnoi v Nazional'nom muzee Ravenni," in *Izvestiia Russkogo Arkheologicheskogo Instituta v Konstantinopole* 8 (1903), pp. 249–63; Mikhail Skaballanovich, *Tolkovyi Tipikon* (Kyiv: 1915), pp. 50–71; Yuri Piatnitskii [Piatnitsky], "Zolotaia navodka: Katalog," in *Dekorativno-prikladnoe iskusstvo Velikogo Novgoroda: kudozhestvennii metall XI–XV veka*, eds. I. A. Sterligova and L. I. Lifshits, Tsentry khudozhestvennoi kul'tury srednevekovoi Rusi (Moscow: Nauka, 1996), no. 73, pp. 291–93.
 61. For this dating of the *Treatise on Dignities and Offices* as well as for further information on Pseudo-Kodinos see *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, s.v. "Kodinos, Pseudo-".
 62. See Nikodim P. Kondakov, *Pamiatniki khristianskogo iskusstva na Afone* (Saint Petersburg: Tipografiia Imperatorskoi Akademii nauk, 1902), p. 232.
 63. See Robert Ousterhout, "Byzantine Funerary Architecture of the Twelfth Century," in *Iskusstvo Rusi i stran Vizantiiskogo mira XII veka* (Saint Petersburg: Dmitrii Bulanin, 1995), p. 3.
 64. See Olga E. Etingof, "On the iconography of 'The Virgin of Tenderness (Glykophilousa)'," in *Drevnerusskoe iskusstvo: Balkanny. Rus'*, eds. A. I. Komech and O. E. Etingof (Saint Petersburg: Dmitrii Bulanin, 1995), pp. 102–3, 108–9.

On the Symbolism of Classical Antique Images in Middle Byzantine Art: A Cameo with a Mythological Subject

The use of the classical artistic vocabulary appropriated during the Early Byzantine period in the art produced from the tenth through the twelfth century elucidates the Middle Byzantine attitude toward classical antiquity. In the centuries between the Early and Middle Byzantine periods, the evolution of this artistic vocabulary resulted in differences between pre-Iconoclastic and post-Iconoclastic representations.¹ In the Middle Byzantine period, Roman emblematic devices and mythological subjects continued to be used in a Christian context. However, they almost invariably took on a new and extremely intricate symbolism understood only by an elite minority.

The State Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg possesses an unconventional three-layered sardonyx cameo set in an eighteenth-century gold mount that was once in the collection of Catherine the Great (fig. 1). Although the carving of the gem is not of the highest quality, and many details are

unclear, the main features of the composition are identifiable. The obverse of the gem displays two figures flanking a bird (a goose or a duck). The figure on the right, while summarily treated, is a muscular but effeminate young male, who extends his right arm toward the bird and passes his left arm behind a column-like structure, which tapers at the top and is decorated with a wave-like pattern. The shorter figure on the left is a female warrior. An inscription consisting of five Greek letters (ΠΟΘΟΣ) appears below the figural composition. The figures and the inscription are cut in relief in the light-colored layer of the stone, and are silhouetted against the contrasting dark-brown layer. Direct analogies for this composition are unknown, and there is no agreement among scholars concerning the identification of the subject matter or the date of the gem. When I first published this cameo, I tentatively attributed it to the reign of Justinian I (527–65), but then its subject was unknown to me.² Several years later, Alexandr Kakovkin suggested that the composition depicts Mars and Venus standing in front of the conjugal chamber, with a goose added to the scene to symbolize fertility, and he proposed translating the inscription as “passion” or “lust.”³

In the pagan pantheon, the goose was the attribute of only two male deities—Pothos and Apollo Pothos.⁴ Extant representations of Pothos were derived from Skopas’s well-known sculptural compositions, which portrayed the deity, in the guise of a naked youth with a goose, in the presence of Aphrodite and her companions.⁵ In these compositions, the gesture of Pothos toward the goose varies: He is seen either holding the bird in his arms, feeding it, playing with it, or simply standing with it at his feet. Stylistically and iconographically, these extant representations of Pothos resemble those



Figure 1. Cameo, with Diana and Apollo Pothos. Byzantine, about 10th–12th century. Sardonyx: 3.2 x 2.6 cm. The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (Inv. no. ω 372)



Figure 2. Cameo, with Diana and Apollo. Late Antique, A.D. 1st century. Sardonyx: 2.4 x 2.2 cm. The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (Inv. no. ж 297)

of Apollo, especially Apollo Saurokton. However, identifications with other pagan gods and heroes, such as Eros, Narcissus, Ganymede, and Meleager, are plausible as well, and there is also a measure of similarity with images of some female deities—in particular, with Niobe.⁶

Apollo Pothos, whose cult emerged at a time of religious syncretism, was depicted as an effeminate youth with a goose or duck at his feet. Along with four other Olympic gods and Herakles, this Apollo type appears on a silver situla (bucket) that bears the stamps of the Byzantine emperor Herakleios (r. 610–41) and is now in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.⁷ It shows Apollo Pothos, who rests his elbow on a pedestal to his right, standing near a sacrificial altar with a bird at his feet. To the left of the altar, Diana, wearing a short tunic, leans on her spear. The representation of a curtain and a lamp suspended above the altar indicates that the composition is set

within a temple structure. The images on the Vienna situla and the Hermitage cameo include the same iconographic elements. It follows that if the identification of the figures on the situla as Diana and Apollo is secure, then the figures on the cameo are also Apollo Pothos and Diana. Moreover, the column-like structure to Apollo's left can be compared to a similar structure on a first-century A.D. sardonyx cameo that depicts Diana and Apollo, also in the Hermitage (fig. 2). The left-hand side of the composition shows Diana seated and holding a spear; Apollo is on the right, leaning on a lyre that rests on a pedestal.⁸ A Byzantine engraver, in copying an archetype from classical antiquity similar to the first-century Hermitage gem, correctly reproduced the silhouette of the pedestal and decorated it with a four-petaled rosette; however, he transformed the lyre atop the pedestal into merely a trapezoidal projection, whose wave-like pattern was all that remained of the strings.

It may not be immediately apparent how the Greek inscription ΠΟΘΟΣ on the Hermitage cameo relates to the composition of Diana and Apollo Pothos. After all, it does not correspond to the type of relationship that existed between the two deities. In various periods and in distinct religious or philosophical contexts the word ΠΟΘΟΣ assumes different meanings. Pothos, as a personified deity and a member of Diana's retinue, symbolized not only erotic feelings but he also was the patron of both flora and fauna; as a result, he appropriated several of Diana's attributes. Attic and Arkadian myths associated Diana with the cults of water, wild vegetation, birds, and animals, and the goddess is frequently depicted surrounded by wildlife.⁹ In one of the poems written by Gregory of Nazianzos, Pothos is described as the patron-deity of the plant kingdom, who presided over the renewal of nature.¹⁰ As early as the works of Theophrastos (about 372–about 287 B.C.), the word ΠΟΘΟΣ was used to refer to a white flower growing in cemeteries and thus came to symbolize death. In Hermetic cosmogony, this is the name of one of the planetary spirits capable of determining a person's fate.¹¹

In Byzantium, names of gods from classical antiquity frequently were used to designate generalized notions that reflected the main qualities of that deity. Such words as Concordia, Homonoia, Hygeia, and Charis were inscribed under images decorating wedding rings and marriage belts, and were understood as general concepts and not as references to specific deities. The word ΠΟΘΟΣ probably was subjected to a similar transformation. Inscribed below the Diana–Apollo Pothos composition, it stood for prosperity. As Apollo and Diana symbolized, respectively, the Sun and the Moon, in the context of the inscription the pair can be interpreted as symbols of the cosmos.

As already stated, when I first published the Hermitage cameo, I tentatively dated it to the sixth century. The criteria for dating Byzantine glyptics, however, are highly spec-

ulative, and while their attribution to a given period, irrespective of the material or the subject depicted, remains difficult, reexamination of stylistic and ideological considerations now appears to indicate a later date.

The Hermitage cameo can be compared to the so-called Apollonios of Tyana gem—a little-known Byzantine glyptic in the British Museum in London.¹² An inscription naming Apollonios of Tyana (A.D. 1st century), a pagan wizard and Neopythagorean philosopher, preceded by a double-armed cross of the type that first appeared in the tenth century,¹³ extends around the edge of the gem. The two gems exhibit similarities in the disposition and gestures of the figures, the treatment of the drapery, and the representation of architectural details. Such stylistic parallels provide indirect evidence for assigning the Hermitage cameo to the Middle Byzantine period.

To date, investigation of the technology of gemstone carving has not been carried out fully enough to enable the Hermitage gem to be dated on the basis of technique. The dates of similarly worked cameos may span several centuries. For instance, some of the Hermitage sardonyx cameos of silhouetted figures against a ground of contrasting color (the cameo with Christ Emmanuel)¹⁴ are assigned to the pre-Iconoclastic period, and others (a cameo with Daniel in the Lion's Den, one with John the Precursor, and another with the Archangel Michael)¹⁵ to the thirteenth century.

While the Hermitage cameo cannot be dated by analyzing the workmanship, its mythological subject, unique among Byzantine glyptics, indicates that it was produced in a period when there was a strong interest in classical antiquity. I assign the Hermitage cameo to the Middle Byzantine period on the basis of general trends in Byzantine art of the tenth through the twelfth century, rather than on concrete iconographic and stylistic characteristics.

I have already noted that the Hermitage cameo exhibits stylistic and iconographic

affinities with the Apollonios of Tyana gem in the British Museum, which, I believe, cannot predate the tenth century. The disposition of the figures and the compositional details on the Hermitage cameo also find parallels on a sardonyx gem with the Crucifixion dated to the second half of the twelfth century,¹⁶ in the Armory of the Kremlin in Moscow. The low-relief, almost flat carving of both the Hermitage and Moscow gems displays a graphic treatment of details and a restrained plasticity in the rendering of figural forms.

The selection of mythological subjects rich in ancient symbolism is characteristic of the neoclassicism associated with the Macedonian and early Komnenian renaissance. Byzantine illuminators of the period frequently employed such themes in the decoration of manuscripts, as is illustrated by the bucolic scenes symbolizing the awakening of nature in the Liturgical Homilies of Saint Gregory of Nazianzos.¹⁷ At the same time, similar motifs appear in the West in Romanesque sculpture.¹⁸

Seals decorated with images of the gods and heroes of classical antiquity also were used in political contexts, as, for example, the seal of Tsar Ivan III (r. 1450–62), which is embellished with an image of Apollo.¹⁹

From the above examples, I conclude that the Hermitage cameo showing Diana and Apollo Pothos should be grouped with such Middle Byzantine works as the bucolic miniatures in the Liturgical Homilies of Saint Gregory of Nazianzos and the carvings of mythological subjects on ivory caskets from the Macedonian renaissance.²⁰

1. See Vera Zalesskaia [Zalesskaya], "Simvolika antichnykh obrazov v rennevizantiiskom iskusstve," in *Vostochnoe Sredizemnomor'ie i Kavkaz*, eds. Alisa Bank and Vladimir Lukonin (Leningrad [Saint Petersburg]: Iskusstvo, 1988), pp. 20–36.
2. See Vera Zalesskaia [Zalesskaya], "Kameia," in *Iskusstvo Vizantii v Sobraniakh SSSR: Katalog Vystavki*, vol. 1, eds. Alisa Bank and Marina Bessonova (Moscow: Sovetskii khudozhnik, 1977), p. 130, note 192.
3. See Alexandr Kakovkin, "Ob opredelenii suzheta na rannevizantiiskoi gemme Ermitazha," *Kavkaz i Vizantiia*, 3 (1982), pp. 168–72.

4. See Johann Sieveking, "Pothos," in *Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, vol. 43 (Stuttgart: Georg Wissowa, 1953), p. 1178. As Apollo's bird, the goose symbolized the sun.
5. See Heinrich Bulle, "Zum Pothos des Skopas," *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts*, 56 (1941), p. 121.
6. W. Müller, "Zum Pothos des Skopas," *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts*, 58 (1943), pp. 171–79.
7. Rudolf Noll, *Vom Altertum zum Mittelalter*. *Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien* (Vienna: Anstalt Beissner and Co., 1958), p. 71.
8. See Oleg Neverov, *Antichnye kamei v sobranii Gosudarstvennogo Ermitazha* (Leningrad [Saint Petersburg]: Aurora, 1988), no. 50.
9. See Liubov Utkina, "Izobrazhenie i master. K ikonografii obraza Artemidy v tvorchestve мастера Pana," in *Zhizn' mifa v antichnosti. Materialy nauchnoi konferentsii Vipperovskii chteniia*, vol. 18, no. 1 (Moscow: Sovetskii khudozhnik, 1988), p. 142.
10. Saint Gregory of Nazianzos, *Poemata Historica. Carminum liber II, Patrologiae cursus completus, Series Graeca*, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne, vol. 37 (Paris: Garnier, 1857), col. 1312.
11. See Johann Sieveking, "Pothos," in *Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, vol. 43 (Stuttgart: Georg Wissowa, 1953), p. 1180.
12. See Ormonde M. Dalton, *Catalogue of the Early Christian Antiquities and Objects from the Christian East in the British Museum* (London: British Museum, 1901), no. 88, p. 14.
13. See F. Daumas and B. Mathieu, "Le Phare d'Alexandrie et ses dieux: un document inédit," *Mededelingen-Letteren Academiæ Analecta*, 49, no. 1 (1987), pp. 45–55.
14. Inv. no. ω373. See Alisa Bank, "Monuments des arts mineurs de Byzance (Xe–XIIe siècles) au Musée de l'Hermitage (Argenterie, Stéatites, Camées)," *Corsi di cultura sull'arte ravennate e bizantina*, 9 (1962), p. 122, fig. 9 a.
15. Inv. nos. ω360, ω357, ω370. See Alisa Bank, "Pokushaj klasifikacii spomenika vizantijske gliptike," *Musej Primenjene Umetnosti Zbornik*, 15 (1971), pp. 5–13.
16. Inv. no. 13799. See Irina Mishakova, "Gemma iz panagii patriarkha Iova," in *Drevnerusskoe iskusstvo*, ed. Gennadii Popov (Moscow: Nauka, 1975), p. 49.
17. See Vasilii Putsko, "Antichnye motivy v gomiliakh Grigoriia Nazianzina i ikh otzvuki v vizantiiskoi illustratsii," in *Antichnost' i Vizantiia*, ed. Liubov Fraiberg (Moscow: Nauka, 1975), p. 335.
18. See Richard Hamann-MacLean, "Antikenstudium in der Kunst des Mittelalters," *Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft*, 15 (1949–50), pp. 157–238.
19. See Nadezhda Soboleva, *Russkie pechati* (Moscow: Nauka, 1991), pp. 140–41.
20. For example, Saint Petersburg, The State Hermitage Museum, Inv. nos. ω18–21. See also Alisa V. Bank, *Byzantine Art in the Collections of Soviet Museums* (Leningrad [Saint Petersburg]: Aurora, 1985), pp. 293–95.

The State of Research on the Monomachos Crown and Some Further Thoughts¹

Among the wonderful objects displayed in the exhibition “The Glory of Byzantium” were the seven enameled plaques from the famous “Monomachos crown,” which is part of the collection of the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum in Budapest (figs. 1, 2, 3).² This was only the second time in this century that the seven plaques left Hungary; the first time was in 1931, when they were exhibited in Paris.³ The plaques and three other items—two medallions with apostles and a small setting half filled with glass—are considered to be an ensemble (fig. 4).

Three plaques on each side, arranged in decreasing size, flank the largest, central plaque. The standing figure of the emperor Constantine IX Monomachos (r. 1042–55) appears on the central plaque,⁴ and is identified by an inscription in blue letters: ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΙΝΟΣ ΑΥΤΟΚΡΑΤΟΡ ΜΟΜΑΧΟΣ.⁵ Two rows of blue spirals with green leaves, usually described as vines, and six birds surround the emperor, who wears a heart-patterned *skaramangion* beneath a *loros*. The emperor holds a labarum in his right hand and carries a small pouch called an *akakia* in his left hand. He stands on a green cushion and gazes to his left.

The empress Zoe (r. 1028–50), who

made Constantine IX Monomachos emperor by taking him as her third husband, occupies the plaque on Constantine’s right.⁶ She wears a costume similar to that of the emperor with the addition of a *thorakion*, which appears to be made of the same material as the *loros* and assumes a shield-like form over her left hip. Leafy scrolls with birds frame the empress, who holds a long scepter in her left hand. She, too, is identified by an inscription: ΖΩΗ ΟΙ ΕΥΣΑΙΒΑΙΣΤΑΘΗ ΑΥΓΟΥΣΤΑ.⁷

The empress Theodora (r. 1055–56), Zoe’s sister, who outlived both the emperor and empress, appears on the plaque on the emperor’s left.⁸ The mirror image of Zoe, she is identified by the inscription, ΘΕΟΔΩΡΑ Η ΕΥΣΑΙΒΕΣΤΑΤΙ ΑΥΓΟΥΣΤΑ.⁹

A plaque with a haloed young woman wearing a heart-patterned garment and dancing with a scarf is found alongside each of the plaques with the empresses. The dancer in the green garment looks to her right¹⁰ and the one dressed in white faces to her left.¹¹ Vines and birds, similar to those on the imperial plaques, encircle the dancers. Unlike the other figures who have green halos, those of the dancing girls are blue. Cypress trees with birds surround the female personifications of the Virtues on the two small arched plaques that flank those with the dancers. Inscriptions identify the figure standing with her arms folded across her chest as Humility (Η ΤΑΠΙΝΟΣΙΣ)¹² and the figure holding her right hand up to her mouth and looking right as Truth (Η ΑΛΙΘΕΙΑ).¹³

Two medallions, one with the apostle Peter, inscribed, Ο ΠΙΕΤΡΟΣ,¹⁴ and another with the apostle Andrew, inscribed, Ο ΑΝΔΡΕΑΣ,¹⁵ differ significantly from the seven plaques described thus far. The characters that comprise the inscriptions are red as opposed to blue; the medallions are composed of two sheets of gold, whereas the



Figure 1. Crown of Constantine IX Monomachos. Byzantine, 1042–50. Gold and cloisonné enamel: (plaques) 11.5 x 5 cm, 10.5 x 4.8 cm, 10.7 x 4.8 cm, 10 x 4.5 cm, 9.8 x 4.5 cm, 8.7 x 4.2 cm, 8.7 x 4.2 cm. Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Budapest (99/1860.1-4; 37/1861.1-2; 51/1861.1-2; 1870.36.1-2)



Figure 2. A Dancing Girl and the Personification of Humility. Detail of the Crown of Constantine IX Monomachos



Figure 3. A Dancing Girl and the Personification of Truth. Detail of the Crown of Constantine IX Monomachos

plaques are made of a single sheet;¹⁶ and four small imprecise holes pierce the medallions, which also lack the two-millimeter-wide gold border with holes that surrounds each plaque. It is clear that the medallions were not part of the original ensemble to which the seven plaques belonged but probably were from a Deesis composition and flanked the figure of Christ. These medallions, along with one of Christ and ten with the remaining apostles, may have been used originally to decorate a frame. The holes in the medallions are evidence of their later reuse.

Also associated with the crown ensemble is a small piece of cut glass, which fills only half the width of its setting,¹⁷ and a modest fragment of enameled gold that is now missing.

Since their acquisition by the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, the seven plaques have been the focus of extensive research, and have been included in virtually every comprehensive survey of Byzantine art.¹⁸ It is widely accepted that they formed part of a crown associated with Constantine IX Monomachos. This is extremely significant, as very few Byzantine enamels can be dated on the basis of the subjects they depict and even fewer are known to have formed part of a crown. Therefore, the Monomachos plaques are key monuments in the history of Byzantine enamel work.

At the turn of the twentieth century, leading scholars, including Nikodim Kondakov and Marc Rosenberg, divided Byzantine enamels into four distinct historical periods. According to their studies, the Monomachos crown belongs to the beginning of the third period, known as the “abstract-linear.”¹⁹ The figures on the plaques date the crown to the reign of Constantine IX Monomachos, thereby establishing the terminus a quo for the “abstract-linear” period.

The fundamental monograph on the Monomachos crown, which was written in 1937 by Magda Bárányiné-Oberschall, outlines most of the questions and problems concerning the ensemble. Since World War II,

research on the crown has focused on the represented figures and their imperial insignia. Percy Ernst Schramm produced the first of the later studies, which was followed by the work of such scholars as André Grabar, Sándor Mihalik, Zoltán Kádár, and Géza de Francovich.²⁰ Today, the portraits on the plaques of the crown are still of central importance in the study of imperial imagery, and their secular versus sacred character continues to be debated.

Until recently, all investigators have assumed the Monomachos plaques to be outstanding mid-eleventh-century works of Zeuxippos's court goldsmiths' workshop, made under the direct patronage of Constantine IX Monomachos, Zoe, and Theodora, although several scholars did find the titles of the figures and the orthography of the inscriptions problematic, and noted other anomalies.²¹ One of the latest studies, an article by Nicolas Oikonomides, “La Couronne dite de Constantin Monomaque,” however, presents a radically different opinion.²² Oikonomides argues against the imperial patronage of the crown, suggesting instead that it may be a nineteenth-century forgery, as is most likely the case with a plaque of a dancing girl in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London,²³ as well as with the enameled plaques formerly in the Botkin Collection.²⁴ Oikonomides formulates his doubts regarding the crown in eight main points (although in the conclusion he lists thirteen). The present paper will consider these arguments. For clarity, the points discussed are numbered according to the order in which they appear in Oikonomides' article.

Before addressing Oikonomides' arguments, I will review the circumstances of the 1860 find, which he views with suspicion. What do we actually know about the find? The site is identified with the village of Nyitraivánka (Ivánka pri Nitre, Slovakia) and with the neighboring estates of Bucsány. Two persons are connected with the find, János Huszár and Tivadar Markovics. Huszár, a



Figure 4. Seven plaques, two medallions, and a gold and glass setting from the Crown of Constantine IX Monomachos. Byzantine, 1042–50. Gold and cloisonné enamel: (plaques) 11.5 x 5 cm, 10.5 x 4.8 cm, 10.7 x 4.8 cm, 10 x 4.5 cm, 9.8 x 4.5 cm, 8.7 x 4.2 cm, 8.7 x 4.2 cm; (medallions) each, 2.9–3 cm; (setting) 1.7 x 1.5 cm. Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Budapest (99/1860.I-4; 37/1861.I-2; 51/1861.I-2; 1870.36.I-2)



Figure 5. The Empress Theodora with the Monk Lazaros. Detail of an illumination from the Madrid Chronicle of John Skylitzes. South Italian, about 1150–75. Tempera on vellum: full page, 35.5 x 27 cm. Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid (Vitr. 26–2, fol. 50v a). From A. Grabar and M. I. Manoussacas, *L'Illustration du manuscrit de Skylitzès de la Bibliothèque nationale de Madrid* (Venice: 1979), fig. 48

member of one of the four noble families that owned Nyitraivánka, found the hoard of enamels and sold the majority of them to the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum in three separate transactions between 1860 and 1861; Markovics, a merchant, sold the remaining items in the hoard to the same museum in 1870. The earliest publications credit Markovics, who was acting on behalf of the owner, Huszár, with bringing all of the enamels to Pest.²⁵ This appears to be confirmed by the sales prices. The plaques sold in Huszár's name were reduced in price from fifty to twenty-five forints, whereas Markovics charged two hundred forints for a single medallion and other small fragments belonging to him. The first museum record regarding the plaques dates to 1861, and states that Huszár sold the plaques for their material value.²⁶ Apart from this reference, the names of Huszár and Markovics never appear again in the accession notebooks of the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum. Huszár's tomb-

stone in Nyitraivánka notes that he and his wife died in 1869 without lineal descent, which explains why Markovics waited until 1870 to sell his part of the hoard.

Nyitraivánka is a village situated on the north-south highway connecting the towns of Nitra (Nyitra, in Hungarian) and Komárom. Nitra, five miles north of Nyitraivánka, was the center of the lands owned by the heir to the throne (the dux) in the eleventh century.²⁷ In 1914, a coin of Constantine IX Monomachos was found in Nyitraivánka, and fourteen miles to the east, in the village of Tild (Čífare-Telince, Slovakia), seven coins of Constantine IX Monomachos and one earlier coin were discovered.²⁸ The frontier of Nyitraivánka, called Bucsány, is a forested hillside, which extends north in the direction of Nitra. It is the farthest slope of the Carpathian Mountains, in the region of Nitra.

Therefore, if an army had approached Nitra from the west, from the direction of

Bratislava, aiming simply to bypass Nitra without conflict or to deceive the outposts sent from Nitra by attacking from the south, the best solution would have been to circumvent the town along the above-mentioned hillside. The army would have been close to the city but hidden from view by the forest, and could have passed through Nyitraivánka. Thus, while in the vicinity of Nyitraivánka, an approaching force could have realized that their presence was observed and, anticipating the arrival of hostile troops from Komárom or Nitra, might have decided to bury its treasures. It is under such circumstances that the Monomachos crown could have been buried near the village of Nyitraivánka.

There were several expeditions from the West against Hungary in the eleventh century that also may have involved raids against Nitra—for example, the 1042 and 1051 assaults by Henry III of Germany (r. 1039–56). In terms of the hoard of enamels, the most interesting expedition was the 1074 campaign against King Géza I of Hungary (r. 1074–77) by Salomon (r. 1063–74), the ex-sovereign of Hungary, and Henry IV (r. 1056–1105), his brother-in-law, who was also the German king and later emperor. During this campaign, Salomon and Henry IV laid unsuccessful siege to Nitra, after which they proceeded southeast, as far as the bend of the Danube.²⁹ The site of the previously mentioned hoards of coins corresponds to their path of movement. Salomon could have acquired the enameled plaques either through his wife, Judith, the daughter of Henry III of Germany, or through his father, King Andrew I of Hungary (r. 1046–60). The connections between Constantine IX Monomachos and Henry III are well documented and include a detailed—although misleading—record of the gifts presented to Henry III by Constantine IX Monomachos in 1049.³⁰ On the other hand, there is no direct evidence associating King Andrew I of Hungary with the Monomachos plaques, even though such a relationship is postulated in most studies of the crown. Nevertheless, a

gift consisting of the enameled plaques could have been presented to one of the monarchs under discussion, even if no substantiating evidence survives. What is highly probable is that the ensemble to which the plaques belonged was buried in the eleventh century.

The narrow metal strips along the perimeters of the plaques and the irregularly spaced holes drilled through them suggest that the plaques were intended to be sewn onto a support of leather or fabric. A similar strip with holes, to which pearls were attached, decorates the diadem found in 1889 in Kyiv³¹ and the one discovered in 1900 in the Ukrainian village of Sakhnivka.³² The crown from the Preslav Treasure also is perforated with holes, but somewhat differently; it does not have a strip attached to the reverse.³³ The diminishing sizes of the relatively large Monomachos plaques, their arched shapes, and the representations on them strongly suggest that they formed a crown.³⁴ Several somewhat-later depictions of women's crowns help us to reconstruct the Monomachos crown, among them the now-lost fresco from the Parthenon in Athens,³⁵ the enamel of Saint Helena on the Esztergom Staurotheke,³⁶ and the mosaic of aristocratic women wearing diadems, on the tympanum above the entrance to the Basilica of San Marco in Venice.³⁷ A number of miniatures in the Madrid Chronicle of John Skylitzes offer the most convincing models for the reconstruction of the Monomachos plaques and support the opinion of such scholars as Deér, who believe them to be the remains of a woman's crown.³⁸ On the verso of folio 50 (miniature a) and on folio 51, Theodora (r. 842–56), wife of the Iconoclast emperor Theophilos (r. 829–42), wears a cylindrical headdress decorated with several arched plaques that are encircled by pearls and arranged in diminishing size, with the largest plaque in the center (fig. 5).³⁹

In point four of his article, Oikonomides indicates that the inscriptions on the plaques contain numerous errors (thirteen to be precise) and that most of the accents are incor-



Figure 6. Scenes from the Life of David. Illumination of Psalm 151, from the Vatican Psalter. Byzantine, 1058–59. Tempera on vellum: 33 x 27 cm. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City (Vat. gr. 752, fol. 449r). From *The Illustrations in the Manuscripts of the Septuagint*, vol. 3, part 2, eds. E. T. De Wald et al. (Princeton and London: 1941–42)

rectly placed. This large number of errors merits closer consideration. All of the orthographical inconsistencies reflect differences in spelling and pronunciation. The incorrect placement of accents usually is indicative of a non-Greek master. The most striking error is

the accent placed over the *a* instead of the *i* in the name *Constantine*, which Oikonomides, like Gyula Moravcsik before him,⁴⁰ explains on the basis of one of the modern Greek forms of the name. The same mistake, however, appears in the fourteenth-century *List of Exarchs of Patriarch Kallistos I*.⁴¹ The accent over the *o* instead of the *e* in the name *Zoe* is even more interesting. Such a shift of accent often occurs when proper names are formed from common names. This is reflected in the position of the accent in the Slavic form of the same name, *Zóia*.⁴² The same displacement of the accent appears in the imperial command on the Cross of Irene Doukaina (r. 1081–1118), dated to the 1130s (now in the Basilica of San Marco, Venice), on which “zoe” refers to “life.”⁴³ Oikonomides also notes that the use of the abbreviation mark over the first three letters of *Constantine* is illogical, as the name is not shortened. This may be the result of formed habits of abbreviation, for such a mark appears over the name *Constantine Akropolites*, inscribed on the late-thirteenth–early-fourteenth-century frame of a Virgin Hodegetria icon in the State Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow.⁴⁴ Because all of these inconsistencies find parallels in Constantinopolitan works—some of which have imperial or aristocratic associations—it cannot be assumed that their presence on the Monomachos plaques suggests a provincial origin for the plaques or that it indicates that they are forgeries, as Oikonomides proposes.⁴⁵

Several scholars have found the imperial titles accompanying the figures on the crown problematic, and Oikonomides makes this issue point five in his article. According to Dölger, from the ninth through the twelfth century, the emperor’s official title was *basileus kai autokrator*.⁴⁶ Although the title *basileus* often is used alone, Oikonomides points out that the title *autokrator* never appears by itself, as it does on the plaque with Constantine IX Monomachos. This observation has led some scholars to conclude that the Byzantine court did not always hold the beneficiaries of imperial gifts in great respect, preferring to restrict



Figure 7. The Five Daughters of the Empress Theodora with Their Grandmother Theoktiste. Detail of an illumination from the Madrid Chronicle of John Skylitzes. South Italian, about 1150–75. Tempera on vellum: full page, 35.5 x 27 cm. Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid (Vitr. 26–2, fol. 44v). From A. Grabar and M. I. Manoussacas, *L'Illustration du manuscrit de Skylitzès de la Bibliothèque nationale de Madrid* (Venice: 1979), pl. XI

for itself the use of insignia conforming to all the standards of protocol. On less formal occasions, however, Byzantine titles were not always consistent. On the coins of Michael V Kalaphates (r. 1041–42) and Michael VI Stratiotikos (r. 1056–57), the Byzantine emperors preceding and following Constantine IX Monomachos, the title *autokrator* appears alone.⁴⁷ This title is frequently encountered in inscriptions, on castle walls, and on lead seals, and occurs in all literary genres.⁴⁸ So, while the use of the title *autokrator* may be interpreted as an indication that the crown was not commissioned for the emperor's official use, it also argues against the crown being a forgery.

The insignia worn by the three rulers on the Monomachos plaques constitutes points two and three in Oikonomides' article. The second point, the description and discussion of the crowns worn by the imperial figures, reveals the shortcomings of the author's approach of writing about an object he has

never seen, since Oikonomides assumes that a cross surmounts the crown of Theodora, and that the crowns of the other imperial figures do not display such crosses. However, crosses do not decorate any of the crowns; instead, three small leaves and triangular finials top the crowns of the two empresses. Oikonomides finds the finials unusual, even though similar ones may be seen on the crowns of female figures represented in two works from the Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine on Mount Sinai—on the empresses in the portrait of the same triad in the Homilies of Saint John Chrysostom (Ms. 364, fol. 3r) and on that of Saint Catherine, who is depicted on the bottom frame of an icon of the Crucifixion.⁴⁹ Other twelfth-century representations of crowns also display these finials.⁵⁰ Oikonomides goes on to note that the curved shape of the *prependoulia*, or hanging ornaments, which conforms to the contours of the face, is unprecedented in Byzantine works of art, and does not appear



Figure 8. Plaque with an Archangel and an Empress, from the Khakhuli Triptych. Byzantine or Georgian, 11th century. Gold and cloisonné enamel: 5 x 4 cm. The Georgian State Art Museum, Tbilisi

until later in Western art. However, this detail does occur, although infrequently, in imperial portraiture. A slight curve of the *prependoulia* can be observed in the mosaic portrait of Constantine IX Monomachos in the Cathedral of Hagia Sophia. The curve is more pronounced in the representation of Solomon in the Resurrection mosaic at the *katholikon* of the Monastery of Hosios Loukas in Phokis, Greece. The appearance of this curved shape can be traced to the figure of Alexander the Great depicted on the crown from the village of Sakhnivka in Ukraine, while the most striking analogies appear in the representations of kings—especially, that of David—in the eleventh-century Vatican Psalter, as the scene of the wedding of David and Michal illustrates (fig. 6).⁵¹ These images suggest that in the eleventh and twelfth centuries differences in the portrayal of crowns, even in Constantinopolitan works, were a much more common occurrence than Oikonomides assumes.

Oikonomides claims, in point three, that the position of the shield-like garment on the left side of the empress Zoe's torso is another indication that the plaques are not authentic. There are many unresolved issues regarding this article of clothing, as has been demonstrated in Wipertus Rudt de Collenberg's study.⁵² The original name of the garment is unknown, and although the word *thorakion*, adopted in earlier literature, is incorrect, it remains in use. Originally, the garment could have been part of a *loros* with no border on the right side, which was decorated with a cross. This type of *loros* was brought forward from the back and usually appeared on the right side of the torso. Eventually, this shield-like segment of the *loros* may have developed into a separate garment, for, as early as the tenth century, there is evidence of its inclusion in portrayals of saints. There are images that indicate that such a garment may be traced to the Late Antique period, and that it was forgotten for centuries, or was not in frequent use. The earliest surviving depictions of the garment appear in Middle Byzantine portraits of the empresses Zoe and Theodora. Therefore, these early examples should show the garment as it looked in early prototypes—that is, as part of a *loros* and not as a separate shield-like appendage. Among the three most important portraits of Zoe, however, only the mosaic in the Cathedral of Hagia Sophia may be interpreted as corresponding to the prototype, although the partial destruction of the mosaic makes even this correspondence uncertain. The shield-shaped *thorakion*, which tapers at the end, not only is seen on the plaques but appears on the coins of Theodora. The depiction of the three rulers in the aforementioned Sinai manuscript shows the *thorakion* without the cross and with a few other minor anomalies. Furthermore, the two empresses portrayed on the enameled plaques wear the *thorakion* on opposite sides of the torso. Oikonomides noted that the position of Zoe's *thorakion*—on the left side—is an anomaly, and seems to have

been an attempt to create symmetry, as was mentioned already by Magda Bárányné-Oberschall.⁵³ However, Saint Catherine, one of the most important female saints, wears her *thorakion* on the “wrong” side in her portrait in the almost contemporaneous Theodore Psalter.⁵⁴ A miniature from the Madrid Chronicle of John Skylitzes shows the five daughters of the emperor Theophilos with their grandmother; four of the daughters wear the *thorakion* on their right side, while the fifth daughter wears it on the left (fig. 7).⁵⁵ The *thorakion* also is worn on the “wrong” side in some eleventh-century frescoes.⁵⁶

Another unusual feature of the costume of the empresses that is related to the *thorakion* is the single long sleeve of the *skaramangion* shown covering one arm and leaving the other one bare—a detail that is rare but not unique. According to Oikonomides, however, it is unprecedented, and indicates that the forger misinterpreted the components of Empress Irene’s costume on the Pala d’Oro in the Basilica of San Marco in Venice. Yet, on closer examination, we can deduce that the artist introduced the long sleeve because he misunderstood the part of the *loros* that should have incorporated the *thorakion*, its end visible on the arm opposite it—that is, exactly where the long sleeve is to be found.⁵⁷ Three eleventh-century oval medallions on the Khakhuli Triptych in the Georgian State Art Museum in Tbilisi include this feature in the costumes of the empresses (fig. 8), and, except for the yellow band that decorates the borders of the long sleeves, the sleeves are very similar to those of Zoe and Theodora on the Monomachos plaques. Shield-like *thorakia* also are part of the costumes of the figures on the Khakhuli medallions. The sleeves and *thorakia*, as well as a few other iconographical inconsistencies on the Khakhuli Triptych medallions, have been interpreted as indications of their manufacture by a provincial workshop, the location of which is difficult to establish.⁵⁸ These details underscore the similarity of the Khakhuli Triptych medallions to the

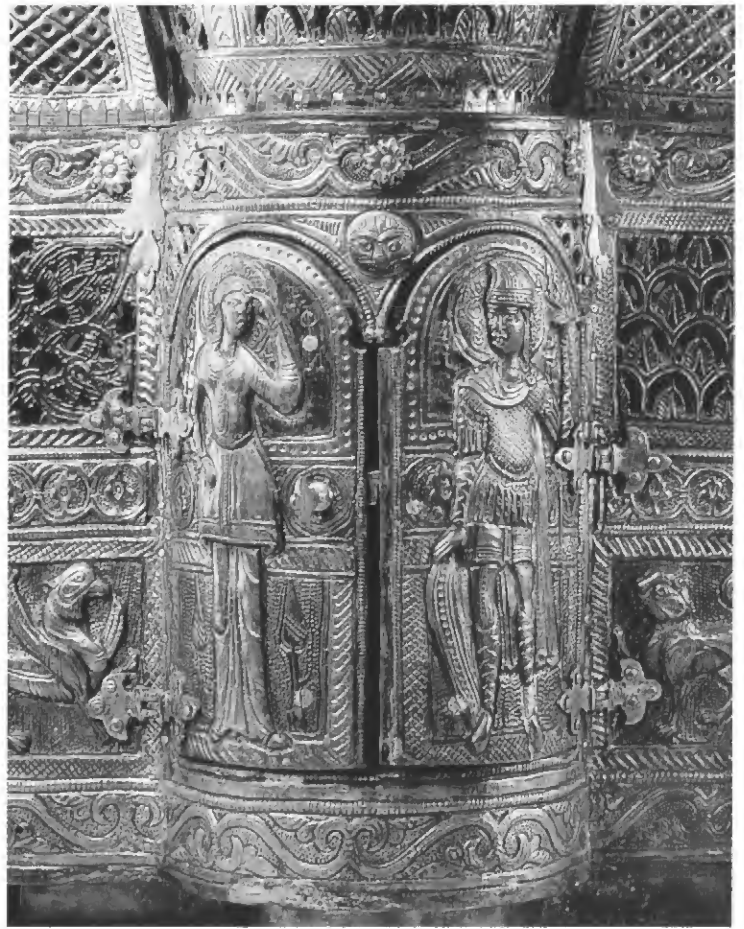


Figure 9. Door of an incense burner in the form of a domed building, with a Personification of Intelligence. Byzantine, 12th century. Silver, partially gilded: 36 x 30 cm. Procuratoria di San Marco, Venice (Hahnloser 109)

plaques on the Monomachos crown. While both ensembles are the products of imperial patronage, one should not forget that Constantinople was home to many nationalities, including Caucasians, and thus may have had its own “provincial” schools.

The white object tied with a red ribbon in the emperor’s left hand also merits attention: Known as an *akakia* or *anexikakia*, it is a



Figure 10. Plaque with the Annunciation, from the Pala d'Oro. Byzantine, about 1100. Gold and cloisonné enamel: 13 x 13.4 cm. Basilica of San Marco, Venice

small silk purse, filled with dust, intended to symbolize the emperor's mortality,⁵⁹ and, according to Deér, is the Christian version of the consul's *mappa*. The *akakia* also signifies the humility of the emperor, a theme underscored in coronation orations, which frequently refer to David's humility.⁶⁰ This brings us to the discussion of imperial virtues, which forms point eight of Oikonomides' argument. Two panels on the Monomachos crown have personifications of the Virtues Truth and Humility, but according to Oikonomides, only Truth should be considered an imperial virtue. Nevertheless, as Truth and Humility are religious virtues, both are appropriate in imperial imagery. Humility's gesture is especially relevant in an imperial context. In Byzantium, servants

were represented with their arms folded across their chest, and displays of this gesture appear in contemporary depictions of imperial receptions as well as of the celebration of the Eucharist in church.⁶¹ The identifying pose of the personification of Truth finds parallels in the gestures of figures in manuscript illuminations—as, for example, the way in which Christ points to his mouth as a sign of witnessing the truth when standing before Caiaphas and Annas in the miniature on the recto of folio 2 in the Theodore Psalter.⁶² An emperor possessing the two virtues of Humility and Truth was a model favored by the Church, as the images in the Vatican Psalter (Ms. Vat. gr. 752) illustrate.⁶³

The small cypresses flanking the personifications of the Virtues are echoed by those on either side of the depiction of Intelligence (Η ΦΡΟΝΕΤΙΚΗ) on the door of the incense burner in the form of a domed building in the Treasury of San Marco (fig. 9).⁶⁴ According to Grabar, the incense burner, presumably a twelfth-century South Italian work, is based on an earlier Byzantine prototype. This is important, because it indicates that the association of cypresses and Virtues also probably relies on Byzantine antecedents. The cypresses on the incense burner have forked trunks like those on the twelfth-century bowl with the Ascension of Alexander the Great (Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum, Innsbruck),⁶⁵ which Oikonomides considers to be the main prototype for the Monomachos plaques. The straight tree trunks on the Monomachos plaques are closer to other Middle Byzantine representations.⁶⁶

In point six of his argument, Oikonomides states that the birds perched in the cypresses on the Monomachos plaques have no parallels in Byzantine enamel work, which he interprets as evidence that they are forgeries. However, birds perched in trees appear in Byzantine works executed in other mediums—as, for example, in the cypresses flanking the cross on the back of the ivory Harbaville Triptych in the Musée du

Louvre—which, if one were to accept Oikonomides' logic, argues in favor of the authenticity of the enameled plaques.⁶⁷

At this point in the article, Oikonomides claims that the vine scrolls with birds that surround the figures on the Monomachos plaques differ from those on other Byzantine works in that they completely fill the background. According to Grabar, these vine scrolls, as well as the dancers on two of the Monomachos plaques, originated in depictions of the private gardens of Islamic sovereigns.⁶⁸ Vines and birds framing female dancers also occur on several Sasanian silver vessels.⁶⁹ Henry Maguire has revealed that the close association of the emperor with a garden—an allusion to Paradise—was common in Byzantine rhetoric.⁷⁰ Enameled parallels for the vine scroll with birds appear on the Annunciation plaque of about 1100 that is inscribed in Latin and forms part of the Pala d'Oro in the Basilica of San Marco in Venice (fig. 10),⁷¹ as well as on one of the eleventh-century Byzantine medallions from the Pala d'Oro, which, according to Grabar, depicts Alexander the Great's vision of the earth after his ascension.⁷² The sunken-enamel technique employed in the representation of vines also can be seen on the terminals of the cross of the Eine Staurotheke (in the Church of Saint-Giles in Eine-Audenarde, Belgium), an imperial commission and a work of Constantinopolitan origin that dates to the first half of the twelfth century (fig. 11).⁷³ The twisting vines and straight bifurcate twigs seen on the cross resemble those on the Monomachos plaques with dancers. In conclusion, the motif of the vine scroll with birds can be found on extant Byzantine enamels and reflects a common Constantinopolitan source.

As to the question of the horror vacui effect—one wonders whether the vines and birds filling the entire background of the Monomachos plaques really are as unusual as Oikonomides believes. Could they actually have been inspired by the bowl with the Ascension of Alexander the Great, in Innsbruck? Extant parallels including works from



Figure 11. Eine Staurotheke. Byzantine, early 12th century. Gold and cloisonné enamel, over a wooden core: 14.2 x 8 cm. Church of Saint-Giles, Eine-Audenarde, Belgium

Antiquity argue for the influence of objects produced on the periphery of the Byzantine Empire. For example, vines surround the Crucifixion on the Georgian K'virik'e cross on the Khakhuli Triptych.⁷⁴ There are numerous works with scroll-filled backgrounds dating from the twelfth century on, in addition to the bowl with the Ascension of Alexander the Great, in Innsbruck, such as the reliquary chest formerly in the Treasury of Zagreb Cathedral. The sunken-enamel technique employed to represent vines on objects predating the twelfth century appears to have led to the twelfth-century style that favored an entirely enameled background. These examples suggest a development—although perhaps



Figure 12. David's Victory over Goliath. Illumination from the Vatican Book of Kings. Byzantine, about 1050–75. Tempera on vellum: 21.6 x 28.5 cm. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City (Vat. gr. 333, fol. 24r). From J. Lassus, *L'Illustration byzantine du Livre des Rois, Vaticanus graecus 333* (Paris: 1973), fig. 44

not a linear one—in the horror vacui decoration characteristic of Byzantine art during the period under discussion, and argue against the probability that the Innsbruck bowl with the Ascension of Alexander the Great inspired the Monomachos plaques.

Oikonomides proposes in point seven that the dancers shown on the bowl in Innsbruck provided the prototype for those on the Monomachos crown. Bárányné-Oberschall already noted the striking similarity between the dancers on the two works and concluded that the master of the Innsbruck bowl must have seen the Monomachos

enamels.⁷⁵ Oikonomides goes on to claim that the motif of a dancer kicking up a leg, which reminds him of modern dance steps, could not have existed in Byzantium. Dancing, however, is so frequently represented in Antiquity that Aby Warburg considered the image of a “woman in movement” to be a most appropriate subject for classicizing Renaissance works.⁷⁶ Women dancing with scarves is a classical motif that is found frequently in Byzantine miniatures,⁷⁷ and Late Antique examples of this motif served as prototypes for similar Sasanian and early Islamic representations. The Hellenistic

terracotta with a dancing woman, in The Metropolitan Museum of Art, confirms that female dancers also were shown kicking up their legs in Antiquity.⁷⁸ The similar pose of Islamic female dancers in a restored ninth-century fresco in the Samara palace does not preclude the possibility that the origin of the motif lies in the broader Mediterranean area.⁷⁹ Female dancers strike this pose in such mid-eleventh-century Byzantine miniatures as that of David's victory over Goliath, in the Vatican Book of Kings (fig. 12), which includes eight dancing girls.⁸⁰ In addition to the metalwork bowl in Innsbruck, dancers kicking up their legs can be seen in the decoration on a twelfth-century Byzantine (or Rus') silver cup formerly in the Bazilevskii collection and now in The State Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg (fig. 13).⁸¹ The closest contemporaneous parallel to the Monomachos dancers can be found on a gold ring with the monogram of Nikephoros, found in Bulgaria, which was decorated with two nimbed enameled dancing girls (now missing).⁸² These examples suggest that the dancing female figures on the Monomachos crown represent a familiar motif, which evolved from the complex and continuing interaction of Byzantine and Near Eastern art. While the motif must have originated in Antiquity, Near Eastern models may have inspired its appearance in Middle Byzantine art. From at least the tenth century, Near Eastern influences dominated Byzantine secular art in such mediums as metalwork, textiles, and, indirectly, miniature painting. Therefore, the presence of the dancers with Near Eastern overtones is to be expected on Byzantine works from the tenth through the twelfth century.

There is also some question regarding the symbolism of the dancers, who, together with the figures of the Virtues, may provide a clue to the interpretation of the Monomachos crown. Scholarly opinion is divided as to whether the dancers have a secular, courtly association or a sacred significance. Those who adhere to the former hypothesis include Grabar,⁸³ Mihalik,⁸⁴ Francovich,⁸⁵ and, more

recently, Cormack,⁸⁶ and Steppan,⁸⁷ all of whom draw comparisons with Sasanian and Islamic courtly feast scenes depicting dancers and musicians before the ruler. While, in some Islamic representations, halos may surround the heads of female dancers, the scenes are clearly profane and the halos purely decorative. Although Islamic prototypes may have influenced Byzantine images of secular feasts with dancers, the absence of an imperial banquet setting and the presence of halos around the heads of the dancers and the figures of the Virtues on the Monomachos crown suggest a sacred interpretation for these images. This position is favored by Bárányné-Oberschall,⁸⁸ Kádár,⁸⁹ and Wessel,⁹⁰ who propose that the dancers on the Monomachos crown were borrowed from religious imagery most probably related to the Life of David.

More recent explanations of the imagery on the Monomachos crown, such as those by Restle and Maguire, synthesize and expand on previous opinions. According to Restle, the dancers on the Monomachos crown are not quotations from scenes of secular feasts or religious subjects but, instead, derive from images of the imperial *adventus* (ceremonial arrival).⁹¹ Because the women have halos, Maguire believes that rather than representing Old Testament or contemporary dancers, they might be the Graces and thus would carry a metaphorical meaning.⁹²

In short, dancing girls commonly were depicted in Middle Byzantine imagery. Even though, in some of the examples cited, they clearly were adapted from a scene of a courtly feast or circus performance, in the absence of a banquet context on the crown, they would appear to serve, there, as metaphors for Victory. Eternal victory was one of the basic ideological concepts of Roman imperial propaganda from Late Antique times until the Fall of Constantinople. With the progressive clericalism of victory celebrations, actual dancing ceased to be mentioned in connection with *adventus* ceremonies, from the end of the sixth century on.⁹³ However,

the metaphorical import of such dancing scenes remained widespread in contemporary texts and hymns and increasingly incorporated allusions to the Old Testament. In the case of the Monomachos plaques, the religious overtones of the Virtues and the isolation of the dancing girls from an appropriate context suggest that the plaques should be interpreted according to the theological values inherent in Middle Byzantine imperial texts and iconography.

There was no ritual dancing in the Byzantine Church. Therefore, dance, in ecclesiastical imagery, must be viewed symbolically. The dance of Miriam and her companions after the crossing of the Red Sea often illustrates the First Ode of the psalter. In depictions of this subject women are shown dancing in a circle or in groups of two or four.⁹⁴ Dancing women also appear in scenes from the Life of David; musicians and dancers surround David in his author portrait in the Psalms, and they are present at the celebration of David's victory over Goliath and over the Philistines.⁹⁵ David is usually mentioned in discussions of the iconography of the Monomachos crown, since, after the tenth century, personifications of the Virtues often accompany images of him in Byzantine works of art. In studies of the Monomachos crown, Moses, the other biblical imperial model, is largely overlooked, even though scenes of Miriam dancing with her companions after the crossing of the Red Sea decorated psalters more frequently than scenes of dancers associated with David. One problem in interpreting the dancers on the Monomachos crown according to Old Testament models is that on the enameled plaques the dancers are not part of a narrative context as they are in scenes of triumphal celebrations or author portraits illustrating the Bible. The most abstract image of dancers as an illustration of the Old Testament, which provides minimal reference to the narrative context, is the celebrated illumination on the verso of folio 449 of the Vatican Psalter (Ms. Vat. gr. 752), where the depiction of



Figure 13. A Dancing Girl. Detail of a silver cup. Byzantine or Rus', 12th century. Silver, partially gilded: 9 x 13.8 cm. The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg (Inv. no. ω 72)

Miriam and her dancers as well as of David's musicians serve to recapitulate the Psalms. In patristic literature as well as in the liturgy—for example, in the Morning Office—the victories of David and of Moses are emphasized to illustrate the subjugation of tyranny, with the scriptural hero explicitly and naturally battling the arrogance of his opponent. Imperial rhetoric consistently employs these same stories. Two eleventh-century literary works, when describing imperial military campaigns, allude to the Crossing of the Red Sea: The first of these, the *History*, by Michael Attaleiates (about 1020/30–85), describes the withdrawal of troops led by the future emperor Nikephoros III Botaneiates (r. 1078–81) through regions occupied by

the Turks (Pechenegs/Patzinaks).⁹⁶ The second, a Lenten sermon by Michael Psellos (1018–1081 ?), tells of the victory of a Byzantine emperor, possibly Constantine IX Monomachos, over the Pechenegs (Patzinaks).⁹⁷ In the latter, the defeat of tyranny on earth is paired with the spiritual victory over sin. Such parallels are characteristic of Psellos's Lenten sermons and were intended to underscore the role of the emperor-pontifex as mediator between Heaven and Earth. The appearance of David and Moses in imperial imagery carried similar connotations, David symbolizing the military successes of the emperor on land, and Moses on water. The elimination of earthly tyranny was considered one of the primary responsibilities of the emperor and was compared to the defeat of spiritual tyranny by the Old Testament heroes. Constantine IX Monomachos numbers among those emperors who faced numerous internal as well as external challenges.

Thus, in Byzantine art, dancing can carry several layers of meaning: In short, it can refer to an episode in David's Life or to the Dance of Miriam, thereby serving as an allegorical allusion to Victory. While it is impossible to know which of these interpretations of the dancers was intended in the context of the Monomachos crown, their setting most likely is an indication that the emperor was to be regarded as emulating Old Testament heroes.

Contemporaneous literary examples further reveal that the ideas expressed in the imagery of the Monomachos crown were widespread in Byzantium. Elias Ekdikos (fl. 11th–12th century), an author who was probably a member of the clergy of the Great Church, refers to the Garden of Paradise in his florilegium entitled *Other Chapters*; he describes saints as gifted with knowledge, comparing them to vineyards that are protected from beasts (symbols of bodily passions) by walls but are left susceptible to birds (symbols of spiritual passions).⁹⁸ In his writings, he also draws analogies between the Dance of Miriam and the dance of the

Virtues, interpreting the former dance as a symbol of liberation from the passions.⁹⁹ While Humility and Truth are not usually paired, they appear together as primary Virtues in *Other Chapters*.¹⁰⁰ Similarly, according to Isaac of Nineveh (fl. about 680), a mystical theologian whose works were first translated into Greek in the ninth century, the most important virtues that saints and such biblical heroes as Moses and David possessed were truth and humility.¹⁰¹ Thus, it becomes clear that several of the ideas expressed in the imagery of the Monomachos crown were current in eleventh-century ecclesiastical literature, indicating the influence of religious authors on the imperial court. Perhaps someone in the Church hierarchy composed the iconographic program of the Monomachos crown as a reminder of the principles of good rulership. According to a recent article, this was also the most likely purpose of the Vatican Psalter (Ms. Vat. gr. 752).¹⁰²

I have demonstrated that the elements of the Monomachos crown labeled as anomalies by Oikonomides actually find parallels in contemporary or slightly later Byzantine works. When these details are examined in the context of related art-historical, epigraphical, and theological material, they provide the clearest proof of the authenticity of the crown. The circumstances of the find also argue against Oikonomides' assertion that the enamels are forgeries. Moreover, if we compare them with nineteenth-century forgeries, significant differences become apparent. Oikonomides' goal was to call into question the Monomachos crown and the assertions about Middle Byzantine enamel work that have been established on the basis of the dating and characteristics of this work. His objective was to make clear that Byzantine enamels require further study and to promote their reexamination. These are positive goals, yet Oikonomides neglected to examine carefully the object of his investigation or to search for parallels.

If, as Oikonomides believes, the Monomachos crown is a somewhat second-rate work, who created it, and for what purpose? In Roman tradition, the emperor, upon returning from a military campaign, received a crown (the *aurum coronarium*) from his governors. The Monomachos crown could have been produced for such an occasion. There were a number of triumphal events during the reign of Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos, including his return from exile.¹⁰³ Another possibility is that the crown was produced in a city that had only nominal connections with Byzantium during the period in question (such as Venice, Dalmatia, Kyiv, or a Georgian city). However, if such were the case, an image of the local ruler would appear among the enamels of the crown. What is most probable is that the crown was in some way connected with the emperor Constantine IX Monomachos himself. Perhaps the excessive patronage of this emperor explains the second-rate quality of the enamels. A parallel may be drawn with the many enameled objects given by the emperor and his wife to the Fatimid caliph Al-Mustansir in 1046. Fifty mules were needed to transport these treasures, which undoubtedly were not all made in an imperial workshop.¹⁰⁴ As is suggested by the Monomachos plaques, their counterparts on the Khakhuli Triptych (the oval medallions cited above), and the enameled plaque representing the emperor Michael Doukas (r. 1071–77) on the same Georgian triptych, not all enamels with imperial iconography were of the highest quality. Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos also gave lavish gifts to Western rulers and monasteries.¹⁰⁵ In light of these facts, it is worth considering Cormack's claim that the Monomachos crown is one of the rare surviving Byzantine works commissioned for a definite diplomatic purpose.¹⁰⁶ If the crown were a diplomatic gift, how did the recipient interpret its iconography? If the dancers symbolize Victory (such symbolism also was current in Western Christian cultures), and if King Andrew I of Hungary

(r. 1046–60) were the recipient of the Monomachos crown, the crown's iconography could have served to remind him of the disorderly beginning of his reign, when he had to convert the pagans and face the attacks of Henry III of Germany (r. 1039–56). The names of Andrew's two sons, Salomon and David, indicate that he appreciated the ideals of rulership presented in the Old Testament more than any other medieval Hungarian king. If the crown were presented to Henry III in the late 1040s, it may have encouraged him in his universal political program, the *pax in terra*.¹⁰⁷ If this were so, the later history of the crown would be ironic, since, in this new world order, there would be no room for an independent Hungarian kingdom with a legitimate king, who, having refused vassalage, was counted among the chief enemies of Henry III, and thus may have embodied tyranny in Henry's eyes.

Clearly, it is impossible to draw any final conclusions regarding many aspects of the Monomachos crown. The aim of this paper was to explore the origins of those elements of the crown that Professor Oikonomides viewed as anomalies, which led, indirectly, to a consideration of details of the crown not mentioned by Oikonomides but that substantiate an eleventh-century date for the ensemble of enamels. The many questions raised in the course of this investigation signify the importance of the Monomachos crown in the study of Middle Byzantine art.

1. Many individuals assisted me in the preparation of this article and I am grateful to all of them, particularly to Vladimir and Liza Baranov, as well as to István Bugár, for their help with the translation.
2. See Henry Maguire, "Enamel Plaques and Medallions: 'The Crown of Constantine IX Monomachos,'" in *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, eds. Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), no. 145, pp. 210–12.
3. See *Exposition internationale d'art byzantin, 28 mai–9 juillet* (Paris: Musée des Arts Décoratifs, 1931), no. 488, p. 145.
4. Budapest, Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Inv. no. 1860.99.1.
5. "Constantine, Monomachos, *autokrator* of the Romans."

6. Budapest, Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Inv. no. 1861.37.1.
7. "Zoe, the most pious *augusta*."
8. Budapest, Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Inv. no. 1860.99.2.
9. "Theodora, the most pious *augusta*."
10. Budapest, Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Inv. no. 1860.99.4.
11. Budapest, Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Inv. no. 1861.37.2.
12. Budapest, Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Inv. no. 1861.51.1.
13. Budapest, Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Inv. no. 1860.99.3.
14. Budapest, Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Inv. no. 1870.36.1.
15. Budapest, Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Inv. no. 1861.51.2.
16. It was common practice for Byzantine enamels to be composed of two sheets of gold.
17. The function of the small setting with glass is not clear. It may have served as a reliquary, but, more likely, once held a precious stone that was to be sewn onto a cloth or even attached to the crown.
18. The following is a selected bibliography on the Crown of Constantine IX Monomachos: János Érdy, "Nyitra Ivánka területén 1860 és 1861. évben kiszántott bizanti zománcok, a XI. századból," *Archaeologiai közlemények* 2 (1861), pp. 65–78; Arnold Ipolyi, "Magyar régészeti Krónika," *Archaeologiai közlemények* 2 (1861), p. 285; Franz von Bock, *Das Ungarische Nationalmuseum*, Mitteilungen der K.u.K. Centralkommission (Vienna: 1867), p. 81; Charles de Linas, *Histoire du travail à l'Exposition Universelle de 1867* (Paris: É. Didron, 1868), pp. 121–26; *idem*, *Notice sur quelques émaux byzantins du XI^e siècle conservés au Musée National de Pest* (1868); Jean Labarte, *Histoire des arts industriels* (Paris: 1872), p. 10; Ch. Pulseky, Eugène de Radisics, and Émile Molinier, *Les Chefs d'oeuvre d'orfèvrerie ayant figuré à l'exposition de Budapest*, vol. 2 (Paris: A. Lévy, 1884), p. 81; Nikodim P. Kondakov, *Geschichte und Denkmäler des byzantinischen Emails: Sammlung A. W. Swenigorodskoi*, trans. E. Kretschmann (Frankfurt am Main: 1892), pp. 243–49; Charles Diehl, *Manuel d'art byzantin* (Paris: A. Picard, 1910), pp. 664–65; H. P. Mitchell, "A Dancing Girl in Byzantine Enamel," *The Burlington Magazine* 40 (1922), pp. 64–69; *Exposition internationale d'art byzantin, 28 mai–9 juillet* (Paris: Musée des Arts Décoratifs, 1931), no. 488, p. 145; Magda Bárányné-Oberschall, *Konstantinos Monomachos császár koronája/The Crown of the Emperor Constantine Monomachos*, *Archaeologia Hungaricae* 22 (Budapest: Magyar Történeti Múzeum, 1937); André Grabar, "Le Succès des arts orientaux à la cour byzantine sous les Macédoniens," *Münchener Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst*, ser. 3.2 (1951), pp. 32–60; Josef Deér, "Mittelalterliche Frauenkronen in Ost und West," in *Herrschaftszeichen und Staatssymbolik*, vol. 2, ed. Percy Ernst Schramm, *Schriften der Monumenta Germaniae Historica* 13.2 (Stuttgart: A. Hiersemann, 1955), p. 434; Sándor

- Mihalik, "Problematik der Rekonstruktion der Monomachos-Krone," *Acta Historiae Artium Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 9 (1963), pp. 199–243; Zoltán Kádár, "Quelques Observations sur la reconstitution de la couronne de l'empereur Constantin Monomaque," *Folia Archaeologica* 16 (1964), pp. 113–24; Géza de Francovich, "Il Concetto della regalità nell'arte sassanide e l'interpretazione di due opere d'arte bizantine del periodo della dinastia macedone: la cassetta eburnea di Troyes e la corona di Costantino Monomaco di Budapest," *Arte Lombarda* 9 (1964), pp. 1–48, esp. pp. 19 ff.; Josef Deér, *Die Heilige Krone Ungarns* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1966), pp. 33–88, 139–49 *passim*; Klaus Wessel, *Byzantine Enamels from the 5th to the 13th Century*, trans. R. Gibbons (Greenwich, Conn.: New York Graphic Society, 1967), no. 32, pp. 96–104; Wipertus H. Rudt de Collenberg, "Le Thorakion. Recherches iconographiques," *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome* 83 (1971), pp. 343–45; P. A. Drossoyanni, "A Pair of Byzantine Crowns," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 32.3 (1982), p. 532; Stefan P. Hočik, "Byzantské emaily z Ivanky pri Nitre," *Revue d'histoire de l'art de l'Académie slovaque des Sciences* 1 (1984), pp. 35–50; Scott Redford, "How Islamic is it? The Innsbruck Plate and its Setting," *Miqarnas* 7 (1990), pp. 119–35; Robin Cormack, "But is it art?" in *Byzantine Diplomacy: Papers from the Twenty-fourth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies*, eds. Jonathan Shepard and Simon Franklin (Aldershot, Hampshire, and London: Variorum, 1992), pp. 219–36; Zoltán Kádár, "ΜΙΜΗΣΙΣ Del Christo Re: I simboli delle virtù sulla corona di Costantino IX Monomaco in aspetto dei testi biblici," *Acta Antiqua et Archaeologica* 26 (1994), pp. 77–83; Marcell Restle, "Höfische Kunst in Konstantinopel in der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit," in *Höfische Kultur in Südosteuropa*, eds. Reinhard Lauer and Hans Georg Majer (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994), pp. 29–30; Nicolas Oikonomides, "La Couronne dite de Constantin Monomaque," *Travaux et Mémoires* 12 (1994), pp. 241–62; Henry Maguire, "Imperial Gardens and the Rhetoric of Renewal," in *New Constantines: The Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium, 4th–13th Centuries; Papers from the Twenty-sixth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies*, ed. Paul Magdalino (Aldershot, England: Variorum, 1994), pp. 181–97; Thomas Steppan, ed., *Die Artuquiden-Schale im Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum Innsbruck: Mittelalterliche Emailkunst zwischen Orient und Occident* (Munich: Maris, 1995); Henry Maguire, "Davidic Virtue: The Crown of Constantine Monomachos and its Images," *Jewish Art* 23/24 (1997/1998); Thomas Steppan, "Tanzdarstellungen der mittel- und spätbyzantinischen Kunst," *Cahiers archéologiques* 45 (1997), pp. 141–68, esp. pp. 154–56.
19. See Magda Bárányné-Oberschall, *Konstantinos Monomachos császár koronája/The Crown of the Emperor Constantine Monomachos*, *Archaeologia Hungaricae* 22

- (Budapest: Magyar Történeti Múzeum, 1937), pp. 59–60.
20. See André Grabar, "Le Succès des arts orientaux à la cour byzantine sous les Macédoniens," *Münchener Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst*, ser. 3.2 (1951), pp. 32–60; Sándor Mihalik, "Problematik der Rekonstruktion der Monomachos-Krone," *Acta Historiae Artium Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 9 (1963), pp. 199–243; Zoltán Kádár, "Quelques Observations sur la reconstitution de la couronne de l'empereur Constantin Monomaque," *Folia Archaeologica* 16 (1964), pp. 113–24; Géza de Francovich, "Il Concetto della regalità nell'arte sassanide e l'interpretazione di due opere d'arte bizantine del periodo della dinastia macedone: la cassetta eburnea di Troyes e la corona di Costantino Monomaco di Budapest," *Arte Lombarda* 9 (1964), pp. 19–42.
 21. See Gyula Moravcsik, "The Inscriptions on the Monomachos Crown," in Magda Bárányné-Oberschall, *Konstantinos Monomachos császár koronája/The Crown of the Emperor Constantine Monomachos*, *Archaeologia Hungaricae* 22 (Budapest: Magyar Történeti Múzeum, 1937), pp. 92–95, who rejects the official character of the inscriptions. Franz Dölger speaks of a "völlig unprotokollarische Beischrift"; see Franz Dölger, "Die Entwicklung der byzantinischen Kaisertitulatur und die Datierung von Kaiserdarstellungen in der byzantinischen Kleinkunst," in Franz Dölger, *Byzantinische Diplomatik. 20 Aufsätze zum Urkundenwesen der Byzantiner* (Ettal, Germany: Buch-Kunstverlag, 1956), p. 150. Rudt de Collenberg has noted inconsistencies in the depiction of the *thorakion*; see Wipertus H. Rudt de Collenberg, "Le Thorakion. Recherches iconographiques," *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome* 83 (1971), pp. 343–44.
 22. See Nicolas Oikonomides, "La Couronne dite de Constantin Monomaque," *Travaux et Mémoires* 12 (1994), pp. 241–62.
 23. Inv. no. M.325–1921. The London plaque is discussed in Magda Bárányné-Oberschall, *Konstantinos Monomachos császár koronája/The Crown of the Emperor Constantine Monomachos*, *Archaeologia Hungaricae* 22 (Budapest: Magyar Történeti Múzeum, 1937), pp. 86–89; Klaus Wessel, *Byzantine Enamels from the 5th to the 13th Century*, trans. R. Gibbons (Greenwich, Conn.: New York Graphic Society, 1967), no. 33, pp. 106–8.
 24. See Mikhail Petrovich Botkin, *Sobranie M. P. Botkina* (Saint Petersburg: Tovarishchestvo R. Golike i A. Vil'borg, 1911). The question of the authenticity of the Botkin enamels is dealt with in David Buckton, "Bogus Byzantine Enamels in Baltimore and Washington, D.C.," *The Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* 46 (1988), pp. 11–24.
 25. See János Érdy, "Nyitra Ivánka területén 1860 és 1861. évben kizsántott byzanti zománcok, a XI. századból," *Archaeologiai közlemények* 2 (1861), pp. 71–72, 78.
 26. *Vásárnapi Újság* 16 (April 21, 1861), p. 190. This article also states that the plaques were found in two groups. The plaques discovered in 1860 include Constantine, Theodora, the dancing girl in the green garment, and the personification of Truth; those found in 1861 include Zoe, the other dancing girl, the personification of Humility, the medallions, and some remaining fragments. For an idea of the monetary value at which the items were sold, it is recorded in *Vásárnapi Újság* 16 (April 21, 1861), p. 238, that the same year a countess donated 120 forints to the museum to make ten benches for its garden.
 27. It first may have belonged to Basil, a cousin of King István (Stephen) I (r. 1000–1038) and a presumed usurper who, in 1030, was blinded in this town. In the 1040s, during the reigns of Basil's sons, King Andrew I (1046–60) and Duke Béla (later, King Béla [1061–63]), the dukedom was reestablished. Both the king and the duke, and later their sons, contested the ownership of the land. In the early twelfth century, during King Coloman's reign (1095–1116), the dukedom was abolished and a bishopric was founded in Nitra, but the territory lost its importance. See *Korai magyar történeti lexikon* (Budapest: Akadémia, 1994), s.v. "Hercegség" and "Nyitra."
 28. I am very grateful to my colleague Ágnes Ritoók for this information. See István Gedai, "Fremde Münze im Karpatenbecken aus dem 11.–13. Jahrhundert," *Acta Archaeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 21 (1969), p. 107. A coin of Romanos I Lekapenos (r. 920–44) and one of Christopher Lekapenos (r. 921–931) also were part of the find of Tild; see Vojtech Ondrouch, *Nálezy keltských, antických a byzantských mincí na Slovensku* (Bratislava: Vydavateľstvo Slovenskej Akadémie Vied, 1964), nos. 579, 580; A. Fiala, "Kontakt der Slowakei mit Byzanz im früheren Mittelalter im Lichte der Münzfunde," in *Mitteldonauegebiet und Südosteuropa im frühen Mittelalter, Kolloquium* (Bratislava: Filozofická Fakulta, 1995), pp. 47–56.
 29. This happened after the great defeat of Salomon at Mogyoród in 1074 by King Géza I (r. 1074–77) and Ladislaus (r. 1077–95), as a result of which Salomon lost the throne and was forced to retreat to Pozsony–Bratislava. See György Székely, *Magyarország történeti kronológiája* (Budapest: Akadémia, 1986), vol. 1, pp. 85 ff. This battle for Nitra is recorded in the *Chronicle of Bonfini: Antonius de Bonfinis*, eds. Iosephus Fögel, Béla Iványi, and Ladislaus Juhász, vol. 2, pt. 4, *Rerum Ungaricarum decades* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1936), pp. 45–54.
 30. See Otto Kersten, "Correctiunculae zu Auslandschreiben byzantiner Kaiser des 11. Jahrhunderts," *Aachener Kunstblätter* 60 (1994), pp. 144–48.
 31. Saint Petersburg, State Russian Museum, Inv. no. BK–2756.
 32. The diadem found in the village of Sakhnivka in the Cherkasy region of Ukraine is now in the collection of the Muzei Istorychnykh Koshtovnostei Ukrainy (Museum of Historical Treasures of Ukraine), a branch of the Natsional'nyi Muzei Istorii Ukrainy (National Museum of the History of Ukraine) in Kyiv. It is illustrated in Boris A. Rybakov, *Russkoe*

- prikladnoe iskusstvo X–XIII vekov (Leningrad [Saint Petersburg]: Aurora, 1971), fig. 47.
33. See *La Bulgarie médiévale: Art et civilisation* (Paris: Association française d'action artistique, 1980), no. 167.
 34. Some scholars, nevertheless, have expressed dissenting opinions. See Stefan P. Holčik, "Byzantské emaily z Ivanky pri Nitre," *Revue d'histoire de l'art de l'Académie slovaque des Sciences* 1 (1984), pp. 35–50. The plaques did not form a *maniakion* (torque) or a *kloios* (collar); their proportions exclude such a use. Also, the plaques were not used to decorate the *epōmis chrysotablos*, an overgarment ornamented with golden plaques worn by the *magistroi* (dignitaries), as this garment was certainly made of textile and precious stones. See Johann J. Reiske, ed., *Constantini Porphyrogeniti imperatoris De cerimoniis aulae byzantinae*, 2 vols. (Bonn: Weber, 1829–30), vol. 2, p. 52, verses 710–11. The belt ornamented with enamel plaques mentioned in Arab sources probably was not wide enough to accommodate the plaques. See Marius Canard, "Les Relations politiques et sociales entre Byzance et les Arabes," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 18 (1964), p. 54.
 35. See Wipertus H. Rudt de Collenberg, "Le Thorakion. Recherches iconographiques," *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome* 83 (1971), fig. 74.
 36. See Klaus Wessel, *Byzantine Enamels from the 5th to the 13th Century*, trans. R. Gibbons (Greenwich, Conn.: New York Graphic Society, 1967), fig. 49.
 37. In the scene of the *Apparitio Sancti Marci*. See Otto Demus, *The Mosaics of San Marco in Venice*, 2 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), vol. 2, color pl. 8.
 38. See Josef Deér, "Mittelalterliche Frauenkronen in Ost und West," in *Herrschaftszeichen und Staatssymbolik: Beiträge zu ihrer Geschichte vom dritten bis zum sechzehnten Jahrhundert*, vol. 2, ed. Percy Ernst Schramm, *Schriften der Monumenta Germaniae Historica* 13.2 (Stuttgart: A. Hierseemann, 1955), p. 434.
 39. See André Grabar and Manoussos I. Manoussacas, *L'illustration du manuscrit de Skylitzès de la Bibliothèque nationale de Madrid*, Bibliothèque de l'Institut hellénique d'études byzantines et post-byzantines de Venise 10 (Venice: Institut hellénique d'études byzantines et post-byzantines de Venise, 1979), figs. 48, 50.
 40. See Gyula Moravcsik, "The Inscriptions on the Monomachos Crown," in Magda Bárányné-Oberschall, *Konstantinos Monomachos császár koronája/The Crown of the Emperor Constantine Monomachos*, *Archaeologia Hungaricae* 22 (Budapest: Magyar Történeti Múzeum, 1937), pp. 92–95.
 41. On folio 192 v in the name Κωνσταντῖνος ὁ Μυρσελευώτης. See Herbert Hunger, "Die Exarchenlisten des Patriarchen Kallistos I. im Patriarchatsregister von Konstantinopel," in *ΚΑΘΗΓΗΤΡΙΑ: Essays presented to Joan Hussey for her 80th Birthday* (Cambridge, England: Porphyrogenitus, 1988), no. 33, p. 444.
 42. I am obliged to Dr. Ihor Ševčenko for this information.
 43. Venice, Treasury of San Marco, Inv. no. 57. See the photograph, not the transcription, in André Guillou, *Recueil des inscriptions grecques médiévales d'Italie*, Collection de l'École française de Rome 222 (Rome: École française de Rome, 1996), no. 90.
 44. Moscow, State Tretyakov Gallery, Inv. no. 22722. For an image of the icon and frame see Alisa Bank, *Byzantine Art in the Collections of Soviet Museums*, trans. Lenina Sorokina (New York and Leningrad [Saint Petersburg]: Aurora, 1978), fig. 253.
 45. For faulty inscriptions in manuscripts from the "haut milieu" of Constantinople, and their relevance for ivories, see Anthony Cutler, *The Hand of the Master: Craftsmanship, Ivory, and Society in Byzantium (9th–11th Centuries)* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 72–73.
 46. Franz Dölger, "Die Entwicklung der byzantinischen Kaisertitulatur und die Datierung von Kaiserdarstellungen in der byzantinischen Kleinkunst," in Franz Dölger, *Byzantinische Diplomatik. 20 Aufsätze zum Urkundenwesen der Byzantiner* (Ettal, Germany: Buch-Kunstverlag, 1956), pp. 136–51.
 47. See Warwick William Wroth, *Catalogue of the imperial byzantine coins in the British Museum*, 2 vols. (London: British Museum, 1908), vol. 2, pl. LVIII, fig. 5, pl. LX, figs. 8, 9.
 48. Some further examples from various strata of Byzantine society and administration featuring the title *autokrator* include inscriptions on several turrets in the walls of Constantinople (see Bruno Meyer-Plath and Alfons M. Schneider, *Die Landmauer von Konstantinopel* [Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1943], vol. 2, no. 23); the title *autokrator* in imperial proclamations (see Johann J. Reiske, ed., *Constantini Porphyrogeniti imperatoris De cerimoniis aulae byzantinae*, 2 vols. [Bonn: Weber, 1829–30], vol. 1, pp. 5, 13, 39, 49, 69, 96); the title *autokrator* on imperial lead seals, such as that of Michael VII Dukas (r. 1071–78) (see Gustave Schlumberger, *Sigillographie de l'empire byzantin* [Paris: Leroux, 1884], p. 418); the abbreviation of the title *autokrator* on lead seals (see Werner Seibt, *Die byzantinischen Bleisiegel in Österreich* [Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1978], vol. 1, pp. 99–100, no. 25). On an ivory chess set in the Palazzo Venezia the title *autokrator* is associated with an imperial image (see André Guillou, *Recueil des inscriptions grecques médiévales d'Italie*, Collection de l'École française de Rome 222 [Rome: École française de Rome, 1996], no. 50). Even the most distinguished chroniclers, such as Michael Psellos, chronicler of Constantine IX Monomachos, use *autokrator* as the imperial title (see Émile Renauld, ed., *Chronographie*, 2 vols. [Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1926–28], vol. 1, p. 5, line 1, vol. 2, p. 2, line 2). One could provide a long list of examples as evidence of the use of titular forms that vary from the officially accepted standard title for the emperor of the East Roman Empire.
 49. See Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom, eds., *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle*

- Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), no. 245, p. 372. In this exhibition catalogue the icon is dated to about 1100 and attributed to Sinai or Constantinople.
50. For example, the crown worn by Saint Irene in the early-eleventh-century mosaic in the Monastery of Hosios Loukas, Phokis, and the crown worn by Saint Helena in a fresco postdating 1191 in the Church of Saint George, Kurbinovo, Macedonia.
 51. Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 752, folios 163 v, 449 r. See Ioli Kalavrezou, Nicolette Trahoulia, and Shalom Sabar, "Critique of the emperor in the Vatican Psalter gr. 752," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 47 (1993), pp. 195–219, fig. 5.18.
 52. See Wipertus H. Rudt de Collenberg, "Le Thorakion. Recherches iconographiques," *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome* 83 (1971), pp. 263–361.
 53. Magda Bărânyiné-Oberschall, *Konstantinos Monomachos császár koronája/The Crown of the Emperor Constantine Monomachos*, *Archaeologia Hungaricae* 22 (Budapest: Magyar Történeti Múzeum, 1937), p. 68.
 54. London, The British Library, Department of Manuscripts, Add. Ms. 19352, fol. 167. The manuscript was produced in the Stoudios Monastery in Constantinople. While Saint Catherine wears her *thorakion* on the left side, the female figure on folio 130, possibly symbolizing Mount Sion, wears her *thorakion* on the right. See Wipertus H. Rudt de Collenberg, "Le Thorakion. Recherches iconographiques," *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome* 83 (1971), figs. 45, 46.
 55. Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, Vitr. 26–2, fol. 44v: "Theoktiste teaching the daughters of Theophilos to venerate icons." See Wipertus H. Rudt de Collenberg, "Le Thorakion. Recherches iconographiques," *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome* 83 (1971), fig. 70.
 56. Saint Helena wears the *thorakion* on the left side in a fresco dated to 1070 in the Sakli Kilise (Church of Saint John), Göreme Valley, Cappadocia, Turkey. See Marcell Restle, *Byzantine Wall Painting in Asia Minor* (Greenwich, Conn.: New York Graphic Society, 1968), vol. 2, fig. 21. Other twelfth-century examples of the *thorakion* worn on the left side may be seen in the fresco of Saint Helena in the Church of Hagioi Kosmas and Damianos, Kastoria, Greece (see Petar Dinekov, ed., *Kirillo-Metodievskia Enciklopedia* [Sofia: Bălgarska akademija na naukite, 1984], vol. 1, p. 685); the depiction of an empress in the Liturgical Homilies of Saint Gregory of Nazianzos (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Coislin 239) (see Henri Omont, *Miniatures des plus anciens manuscrits grecs de la Bibliothèque Nationale du VIe au XIVe siècle* [Paris: H. Champion, 1929], pl. CXVII, fig. 15); and the fresco of Saint Helena, postdating 1191, in the Church of Saint George, Kurbinovo, Macedonia; for other later examples see Wipertus H. Rudt de Collenberg, "Le Thorakion. Recherches iconographiques," *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome* 83 (1971), figs. 60, 69, 76.
 57. For an example of the single long sleeve not obviously connected to the *thorakion* see the eleventh-century miniature of Saint Helena (with Constantine and the cross), in Parma, Palatina 5 (fol. 12v), illustrated in Wipertus H. Rudt de Collenberg, "Le Thorakion. Recherches iconographiques," *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome* 83 (1971), fig. 54.
 58. See Leila Z. Khuskivadze, *Gruzinskie emalii* (Tbilisi: Metsniereba, 1981), pp. 89–91. The anomalies cited, and the veil-like ornament suspended from the crown of each of the empresses—which has been compared to a specific type of Georgian veil—constitute the most significant evidence in support of locating the workshop that produced the Khakhuli medallions. However, the veil-like ornament may have Byzantine sources; see the fresco of Saint Helena, dated to 1144, in the Cathedral of Sviataia Sofiia, Novgorod, illustrated in Wipertus H. Rudt de Collenberg, "Le Thorakion. Recherches iconographiques," *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome* 83 (1971), fig. 61.
 59. A white object of similar shape and tied with a red ribbon can be seen on the medallion with Constantine the Great on the Pala d'Oro in San Marco. Hārūn ibn Yahyā (9th–10th century) mentions the use of the sack as a symbol of mortality, and Pseudo-Kodinos (14th century) interprets the *anexikakia* as an allusion to the mortality as well as the humility of a ruler. See *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst*, s.v. "Insignien."
 60. See Henry Maguire's catalogue entry on the Monomachos plaques in Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom, eds., *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), no. 145, p. 210, and his article, "Davidic Virtue: The Crown of Constantine Monomachos and its Images," *Jewish Art* 23/24 (1997/1998).
 61. Examples include the miniature of David seated at a table attended by servants, in the Vatican Psalter (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 752), and the faithful attending the liturgy in the fresco in the sanctuary of the Cathedral of Sv. Sofija, Ohrid, Macedonia. In Antiquity, in portrayals of Persian royal ceremonies, slaves were shown with their arms folded across the chest. This gesture was adopted for the representation of servants in Byzantine court ceremonies and its use was widespread in Middle Byzantine times. See Andreas Alföldi, "Die Ausgestaltung des monarchischen Zeremoniells am römischen Kaiserhofe," *Mitteilungen des deutschen archäologischen Instituts, Römische Abteilung* 49 (1934), pp. 34–35; Otto Treitinger, *Die oströmische Kaiser- und Reichsidee* (Darmstadt: Gentner, 1956), pp. 65–66.
 62. London, The British Library, Department of Manuscripts, Add. Ms. 19352, fol. 2r. For an illustration of the miniature see Yiannis Vitaliotis, "Le Conseil des impies dans les psautiers Vaticanus graecus

- 1927 et de Kiev," *Cahiers archéologiques* 43 (1995), p. 155.
63. See Ioli Kalavrezou, Nicolette Trahoulia, and Shalom Sabar, "Critique of the emperor in the Vatican Psalter gr. 752," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 47 (1993), pp. 195–219.
 64. Venice, Procuratoria di San Marco, Hahnloser 109. See Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom, eds., *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), no. 176, p. 251.
 65. See Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom, eds., *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), no. 281, pp. 422–23.
 66. For example, the straight tree trunks on the Monomachos plaques resemble the tree trunks on the Byzantine Pantokrator enamel on the Holy Crown of Hungary. The latter, however, have different designs. Therefore, there is no exact prototype, as Oikonomides claims, for the cypresses on the Virtue plaques.
 67. Paris, Musée du Louvre, Département des Objets d'Art, OA 3247. See Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom, eds., *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), no. 80, pp. 133–34.
 68. See André Grabar, *L'Art de la fin de l'Antiquité et du Moyen-Âge* (Paris: Collège de France, 1968), pp. 275–78.
 69. Vessels of this type are in the collection of the archaeological museum in Teheran, Iran. See Josef Deér, *Die heilige Krone Ungarns* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1966), fig. 247. A similar Sasanian vessel is in The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (1967.67.10).
 70. See Henry Maguire, "Imperial Gardens and the Rhetoric of Renewal," in *New Constantines: The Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium, 4th–13th Centuries; Papers from the Twenty-sixth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies*, ed. Paul Magdalino (Aldershot, England: Variorum, 1994), pp. 181–97, especially pp. 184, 189–94; *idem*, "Davidic Virtue: The Crown of Constantine Monomachos and its Images," *Jewish Art* 23/24 (1997/1998). I would like to express my gratitude to the author for sharing his unpublished materials with me.
 71. See Renato Polacco, "Considerazioni sul bilinguismo greco-italiano delle iscrizioni della pala d'oro di San Marco," *Venezia arti* 6 (1992), pp. 15–25.
 72. See André Grabar, "Le Succès des arts orientaux à la cour byzantine sous les Macédoniens," *Münchener Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst*, ser. 3.2 (1951), pp. 47–48.
 73. An inscription on the cross, which mentions Maria Porphyrogenette, the sister of Anna Komnene, records that it was offered to the Nunnery of the Theotokos Kecharitomene in Constantinople; see Jacqueline Lafontaine-Dosogne, ed., *Splendeur de Byzance* (Brussels: Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, 1982), pp. 152, 154, no. O.21.
 74. For the K'virik'e cross see Leila Z. Khuskivadze, *Medieval cloisonné enamels at the Georgian State Museum of Fine Arts* (Tbilisi: Khelovneba, 1984), p. 37, fig. 29. For other twelfth-century examples see Josef Deér, *Die heilige Krone Ungarns* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1966), figs. 156, 165, 166, 168, 233.
 75. See Magda Bărânyne–Oberschall, *Konstantinos Monomachos császár koronája/The Crown of the Emperor Constantine Monomachos*, *Archaeologia Hungaricae* 22 (Budapest: Magyar Történeti Múzeum, 1937), pp. 77–78.
 76. See Aby Warburg, *Sandro Boticellis "Geburt des Venus" und "Frühling": Eine Untersuchung über die Vorstellungen von der Antike in den Italienischen Frührenaissance* (Hamburg and Leipzig: Leopold Voss, 1893). I would like to thank Professor Ernő Marosi for bringing this to my attention.
 77. Two women dance before David and Solomon in a miniature in the ninth-century manuscript of Kosmas Indikopleustes' *Christian Topography* (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 699). Still other examples are illustrated in Anthony Cutler, *The Aristocratic Psalters in Byzantium*, *Bibliothèque des Cahiers Archéologiques* 13 (Paris: Picard, 1984), figs. 41, 120, 131, 177, 401.
 78. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1911 (11.212.20). The Tarantine terracotta dates to about the 3rd century B.C.
 79. See Richard Ettinghausen, "Painting in the Fatimid Period," *Ars Islamica* 9 (1942), p. 114.
 80. Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 333, fol. 24r. The manuscript dates to about 1050–75. See Jean Lassus, *L'Illustration byzantine du Livre des Rois: Vaticanus graecus 333*, *Bibliothèque des Cahiers Archéologiques* 9 (Paris: Klincksieck, 1973), fig. 44; Kurt Weitzmann, *Illustrations in Roll and Codex* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), fig. 174. On the date see John Lowden, *The Octateuchs: A Study in Byzantine Manuscript Illumination* (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), pp. 82–84. Later examples indicate how frequently this type of dancing was represented in miniature painting. For examples see Mount Sinai, The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, gr. 61, fol. 235 v, dated to 1274, in Anthony Cutler, *The Aristocratic Psalters in Byzantium*, *Bibliothèque des Cahiers Archéologiques* 13 (Paris: Picard, 1984), fig. 401; or Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 747, fol. 90v, in Jean Lassus, *L'Illustration byzantine du Livre des Rois: Vaticanus graecus 333*, *Bibliothèque des Cahiers Archéologiques* 9 (Paris: Klincksieck, 1973), fig. 122.
 81. Saint Petersburg, The State Hermitage Museum, Inv. no. ω 72.
 82. The ring was found in the Baths of Aitos (near Burgas) in the early years of the twentieth century and is now in the Natsionalen Arkheologicheski Muzei in Sofia, Medieval Department, Inv. no. 909.

- The ring was published by Margarita Vaklinova, "Prstent na Nikifor (XI v.)," *Bŭlgarsko srednovekovie. Sbornik v chest na prof. Ivan Duychev* (Sofia: 1980), pp. 142–46. I am indebted to Professor Vaklinova for this information.
83. See André Grabar, *L'Art de la fin de l'Antiquité et du Moyen-Âge* (Paris: Collège de France, 1968), pp. 275–80.
 84. See Sándor Mihalik, "Problematic der Rekonstruktion der Monomachos-Krone," *Acta Historiae Artium Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 9 (1963), pp. 199–243.
 85. Géza de Francovich, "Il Concetto della regalità nell'arte sassanide e l'interpretazione di due opere d'arte bizantine del periodo della dinastia macedone: la cassetta eburnea di Troyes e la corona di Costantino Monomaco di Budapest," *Arte Lombarda* 9 (1964), pp. 19–42.
 86. Robin Cormack, "But is it art?," in *Byzantine Diplomacy: Papers from the Twenty-fourth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies*, eds. Jonathan Shepard and Simon Franklin (Aldershot, Hampshire, and London: Variorum, 1992), pp. 219–36.
 87. See Thomas Steppan, "Die Tanzdarstellung der mittel- und spätbyzantinischen Kunst," *Cahiers archéologiques* 45 (1997), pp. 141–68, esp. pp. 154–56.
 88. See Magda Bárányé-Oberschall, *Konstantinos Monomachos császár koronája/The Crown of the Emperor Constantine Monomachos*, *Archaeologia Hungaricae* 22 (Budapest: Magyar Történeti Múzeum, 1937), pp. 75–78.
 89. See Zoltán Kádár, "Quelques Observations sur la reconstitution de la couronne de l'empereur Constantin Monomaque," *Folia Archaeologica* 16 (1964), pp. 113–24.
 90. See Klaus Wessel, *Byzantine Enamels from the 5th to the 13th Century*, trans. R. Gibbons (Greenwich, Conn.: New York Graphic Society, 1967), pp. 96–104.
 91. See Marcell Restle, "Höfische Kunst in Konstantinopel in der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit," in *Höfische Kultur in Südosteuropa*, eds. Reinhard Lauer and Hans Georg Majer (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994), pp. 26–31.
 92. See Henry Maguire, "Enamel Plaques and Medallions: 'The Crown of Constantine IX Monomachos,'" in *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, eds. Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), no. 145, pp. 210–12.
 93. See Michael McCormick, *Eternal Victory: Triumphal Rulership in Late Antiquity, Byzantium, and the Early Medieval West* (Cambridge and Paris: Cambridge University Press and Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 1986), pp. 62, 69.
 94. See Mount Athos, Great Lavra, Cod. B 24, fol. 203r (twelfth century), illustrated in Anthony Cutler, *The Aristocratic Psalters in Byzantium*, *Bibliothèque des Cahiers Archéologiques* 13 (Paris: Picard, 1984), fig. 41; Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. 636, fol. 349r (end of the twelfth century), illustrated in *ibid.*, fig. 120; London, The British Library, Department of Manuscripts, Add. Ms. 36928, fol. 298v (end of the eleventh century), illustrated in *ibid.*, fig. 177.
 95. See Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 752, fol. 3r, illustrated in Iohannis Spatharakis, *Corpus of Dated Illuminated Greek Manuscripts to the Year 1453*, 2 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1981), fig. 121; Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 333, fol. 24r, illustrated in Kurt Weitzmann, *Illustrations in Roll and Codex* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), fig. 174.
 96. See Michael Attaleiates, *Historia*, eds. Wladimir Brunet de Presle and Immanuel Bekker (Bonn: Weber, 1853), p. 232, lines 17–22, as quoted in Anthony Cutler, "Sacred and Profane: The Locus of the Political in Middle Byzantine Art," in *Arte Profana e Arte Sacra a Bisanzio* (Rome: Argos, 1995), p. 327.
 97. See Anthony Robert Littlewood, ed., *Michaelis Pselli Oratoria Minora* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1995), Oration 4, p. 15, lines 140–45, 150–62; in line 173 the emperor calls himself the "new Moses." The Escape from the Pharaoh and the Crossing of the Red Sea are subjects known from later panegyrics—as, for example, that on the Armenian campaign of John II Komnenos; see Paul Gautier, ed., *Michel Italikos, Lettres et discours*, *Archives de l'Orient Chrétien* 14 (Paris: Institut français d'études byzantines, 1972), p. 256.
 98. See Elias Ekdikos, *Anthologion Gnomicon*, in *Patrologiae cursus completus, Series graeca*, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne, vol. 127:1159 B; *The Philocalia*, English trans. and eds. Gerald E. H. Palmer, Philip Sherrard, and Kallistos Ware (London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1986), vol. 3, p. 55.
 99. See Elias Ekdikos, *Anthologion Gnomicon*, in *Patrologiae cursus completus, Series graeca*, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne, vol. 127, col. 1164 A; *The Philocalia*, English trans. and eds. Gerald E. H. Palmer, Philip Sherrard, and Kallistos Ware (London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1986), vol. 3, p. 57: "In olden times, when Miriam, the sister of Moses, saw the fall of the enemy, she took up a timbrel and led the women who sang the victory songs. In our days, when the soul overcomes the passions, love—the highest of the virtues—rises up to praise it. As though taking up the lyre, it embarks upon the contemplation that long ago had been appointed for it as a hard-won addition to its beauty, and it ceaselessly glorifies God, rejoicing with its sisters—virtues."
 100. See Elias Ekdikos, *Anthologion Gnomicon*, in *Patrologiae cursus completus, Series graeca*, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne, vol. 127, col. 1130 B: "Humility is the child of mercy and truth"; col. 1137 A: "Unite truth with humility and you will keep house with justice," and "Truth is blind without humility." See *The Philocalia*, English trans. and eds. Gerald E. H.

- Palmer, Philip Sherrard, and Kallistos Ware (London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1986), pp. 34–35.
101. See Isaac the Syrian, “Logos 63—‘On the First Order of the Gnose,’” in *Sozomena Asketika*, ed. Kallinikos Pantokratorinos (Thessalonike: Bas. Rigopoulos, 1989), p. 321: “The Knowledge of the Truth makes perfect through the Humility the soul of those who have acquired it, as that of Moses, of David, of Isaiah, of Peter, of Paul and of the other saints.”
102. See Ioli Kalavrezou, Nicolette Trahoulia, and Shalom Sabar, “Critique of the Emperor in the Vatican Psalter gr. 752,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 47 (1993), pp. 195–219.
103. See Michael McCormick, *Eternal Victory: Triumphal Rulership in Late Antiquity, Byzantium, and the Early Medieval West* (Cambridge and Paris: Cambridge University Press and Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l’Homme, 1986), pp. 211–12, on the ceremony; pp. 179–84, on the triumphal celebrations during the reign of Constantine Monomachos.
104. See Ghada Hijawi Qaddumi, *Book of Gifts and Rarities: Translation, Annotation, and Commentary of the ‘Kitab al-Hadaya wa al-Tahuf’* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996), pp. 108–9.
105. An overview of the emperor’s patronage can be found in Doula Mouriki, *The Mosaics of Nea Moni on Chios*, trans. Richard Burgi, 2 vols. (Athens: Commercial Bank of Greece, 1985).
106. See Robin Cormack, “But is it art?” in *Byzantine Diplomacy: Papers from the Twenty-fourth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies*, eds. Jonathan Shepard and Simon Franklin (Aldershot, Hampshire, and London: Variorum, 1992), pp. 219–36. Cormack’s interpretation of the possibly erotic connotations of the dancing girls is misleading, if we take into consideration the halos and the choice of Virtues.
107. See *Lexikon des Mittelalters* (Munich and Zürich: Artemis, 1989), s.v. “Heinrich III.”

* During the preparation of this volume, we were sadly informed of the untimely death of Professor Oikonomides. We feel confident that he would have accepted the present article in the spirit of constructive criticism in which it was written. It is our loss that we will never receive his response.

The Artukid Bowl: Courtly Art in the Middle Byzantine Period and Its Relation to the Islamic East¹

The Artukid bowl (figs. 1, 2) in the Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum in Innsbruck is an exceptional example of medieval enamel work.² The discussion that follows will consider the provenance of the bowl and its place within the cultural and political context of the eleventh and twelfth centuries.³ As will be made evident, the complexity and cultural diversity of the border area between the Orient and the Occident make it impossible today to conclusively attribute the bowl to either Byzantine or Islamic culture.

Decorated on both the interior and exterior with cloisonné enameling of the highest quality and measuring an average of 27 centimeters in diameter, the Artukid bowl is the largest extant example of medieval enamel work with an Eastern provenance.⁴ The foot of the bowl and the partitions between the enamels are copper, and originally were gilded.⁵ The handles, which are affixed to the underside of the bowl, were added later, and as a result the enameling in the areas of attachment was severely damaged.

A nearly identical compositional scheme adorns the inside and outside of the bowl. On the interior, the composition centers on a medallion representing the Ascension of Alexander the Great (fig. 3). A wide band containing six medallions separated by regular interstitial zones encircles a border of volute-like ornament, which, in turn, surrounds the Alexander medallion. The wide band contains a total of twelve images (six are enclosed in medallions; six occupy the interstitial zones) oriented toward the center; the twelve make up four thematic groups of three images each. The motifs include birds (an eagle and peacocks); fighting animals; animals resembling lions, flanking palm trees; and figures from the realm of courtly life (a female dancer, a female dancing musician, and acrobats). The related images are arranged along the points of four equilateral triangles. The four triangles (or two hexagons) together comprise a regular, twenty-four-sided polygon, which circumscribes the central Alexander medallion, and establishes the principal directional lines of the composition. The twelve images on the wide band are fifteen degrees off the central axis, a displacement that creates a thirty-degree angle between the palm tree and the peacock framing the head of Alexander the Great⁶ and appears to set the twelve images in the wide band in a carousel-like motion around the central medallion.⁷ The clockwise orientation of the dancer and musician defines the direction of the motion. Around the rim is an Arabic inscription naming the first owner of the bowl (or the person to whom the bowl was dedicated), the Artukid emir Rukn ad-Daula Abu Sulayman Dā'ūd, who ruled from the eastern Anatolian cities of Hisn Kayfa and Khartpert, from 1114(?) to 1144.⁸

A similar compositional and iconographic scheme is seen on the exterior,



Figure 1. Artukid bowl (obverse). Byzantine (?), 1114–44. Cloisonné enamel on copper, with gilded partitions: Diameter, 27 cm; height, 5 cm. Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum, Innsbruck

where, however, the foot of the bowl occupies the position of the central medallion. A narrow ornamental border of connected diamond-shaped forms surrounds the foot, followed—as is the case on the interior of the bowl—by a wide band with six medallions and six interstitial motifs. Unlike the

arrangement on the interior, the interstitial images constitute two groups of subjects (female dancers and dancing female musicians, and palm trees) and are plotted to form two equilateral triangles arranged so that their points form the corners of a hexagon. The six medallions can be grouped into



Figure 2. Artukid bowl (reverse)

three thematic pairs—nimbed eagles, griffins, and figures shown drinking, dancing, or playing musical instruments. Each image faces its counterpart across the bowl. An inscription in Persian, which has not yet been deciphered, appears on the outside rim.

The two inscriptions are key evidence in the attempt to date and establish the provenance of the bowl. The inscription on the inner rim is legible and offers significant historical information.⁹ In comparison with reliable written sources of the same period, the script contains considerable calligraphic

discrepancies and orthographic irregularities, which cannot be attributed to the technical difficulties associated with constructing the inscription from cloisonné partitions.¹⁰ Not only formal but also contextual criteria, such as the semi-official titles employed, suggest that the artist or workshop responsible for the inscription, although aware of the appropriate protocol¹¹ and etiquette,¹² was not competent in the script selected, and probably not proficient in the language either. The as-yet undeciphered inscription on the outer rim makes this all the more evident. The

use of two languages and two alphabets is unusual in Islamic art, and the inconsistencies and lack of accuracy in the inscriptions are in sharp contrast with the exceptional artistic and technical quality of the enamel work, as well as with the mastery of the composition and decorative program.

The composition and the iconography of the bowl reflect a high degree of coordination. The selection and disposition of the motifs within the compositional system produce a clarity that is particularly apparent when the bowl is viewed as a whole, and could have been achieved only in a leading workshop. Numerous Islamic metal and ceramic vessels display compositions similar to that of the Artukid bowl; however, these examples are all of a later date. The hexagonal compositional scheme also was employed widely in Byzantine art, as exemplified by the enameled medallion with a hexagon, on the Pala d'Oro in the Basilica of San Marco in Venice.¹³ Similarly, examples of a design scheme in which an image intentionally deviates from the symmetry of the central axis are found not only in Islamic art but in the Byzantine decorative program of the dome of the Church of the Panagia tou Arakos in Lagoudera, Cyprus,¹⁴ and in the important alabaster enameled paten in the Treasury of San Marco in Venice.¹⁵

While the majority of the motifs on the Artukid bowl are part of the Christian repertoire, some are associated with Islamic art. The iconographic program of the bowl resembles the decorative solutions seen on twelfth-century Constantinopolitan courtly objects, which appropriate Islamic motifs. In this period, Byzantine elements also enriched the vocabulary of Islamic courtly art. Such reciprocal cultural exchanges were in evidence especially in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. A predominantly profane artistic vocabulary was employed in the decoration of highly prized luxury courtly objects made of precious materials and intended for a very select clientele that, however, was not defined by territorial or religious boundaries. The

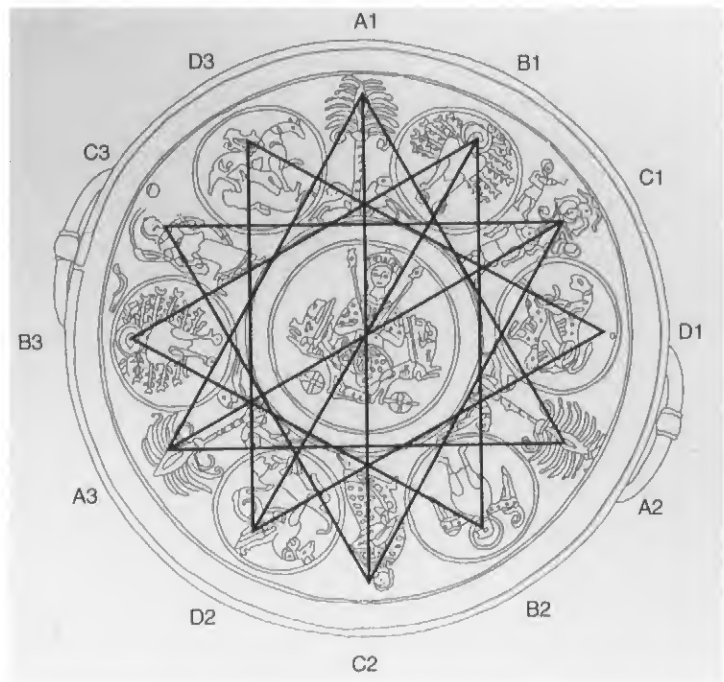


Figure 3. Schematic drawing of the Artukid bowl (obverse). After T. Steppan, *Die Artuqid-Schale im Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum Innsbruck: Mittelalterliche Emaillkunst zwischen Orient und Occident* (Munich: 1995), pl. 14

cultural border did not always correspond to the territorial border between Byzantium and the Islamic East, and, after the end of the reign of Emperor Basil II (976–1025), it was constantly changing, usually to the disadvantage of the Byzantines.

Middle Byzantine art adopted from Late Classical art the secular theme of the Ascension of Alexander the Great, based on the Alexander Romance by Pseudo-Kallisthenes.¹⁶ While, in Early Christian art, the subject symbolized *superbia* (pride), in Byzantine art the imperial connotations of the apotheosis of a successful ruler were emphasized. Thus, Byzantine depictions of Alexander consistently show him as a

Byzantine emperor. The tenth-century ivory tablets in the Hessisches Landesmuseum in Darmstadt,¹⁷ the twelfth-century marble relief on the façade of the Cathedral of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople,¹⁸ and the marble reliefs from the Docheiariou Monastery on Mount Athos and from the Peribleptos Monastery in Mistra¹⁹ indicate that the scene of the Ascension of Alexander was part of the repertoire of Byzantine art. The twelfth-century marble sculpture on the north façade of San Marco in Venice, most probably a *spolium* from Constantinople (fig. 4),²⁰ as well as the twelfth-century stone reliefs from the Demitrievskii and the Uspenskii cathedrals in Vladimir in Russia²¹ demonstrate that the scene's imperial connotations led to its appropriation in areas subject to strong Byzantine influence. Located near the relief of the Ascension of Alexander on the north façade of San Marco (fig. 5) are eleventh- or twelfth-century marble tondi with depictions of animal combat and birds, identical to those seen in the medallions on the Artukid bowl.²² Thus, the iconographic programs of these tondi and of the Alexander relief parallel that of the Artukid bowl.

The scene of the Ascension of Alexander also is the subject of several Byzantine enamels, such as an eleventh-century medallion from the Pala d'Oro (fig. 6),²³ a tenth-century diadem from Veliki Preslav in Bulgaria,²⁴ and a twelfth-century diadem found in 1900 in the village of Sakhnivka in Ukraine.²⁵ The enamel from the Pala d'Oro is one of a group of medallions with courtly images made in Constantinople during the second half of the eleventh century.²⁶ The griffins on this medallion are remarkably similar to those on the Artukid bowl.²⁷ Also, Alexander's face, crown, and the ornamentation of his garment on the Artukid bowl bear an astounding likeness to the representation of the features of a mounted emperor shown falcon hunting on another medallion from the Pala d'Oro.²⁸ The enamels on the Pala d'Oro with courtly subjects reflect a profane, elite context. Such images belonged more to the private sphere,

as opposed to those that portrayed the Byzantine emperor in his role as Christian ruler and earthly representative of the celestial God—a theme based on the imperial ideology of Late Antiquity. Typological comparisons of the Byzantine emperor with such figures as Alexander the Great and Herakles further document the appropriation of the imperial imagery of Antiquity by the Byzantines.

Islamic art also adopted the theme of the Ascension of Alexander, as illustrated by the highly schematic version on the twelfth-century Fatimid(?) *muqarnas* ceiling in the Cappella Palatina in Palermo.²⁹ Although it does not resemble the scene on the Artukid bowl and deviates from the usual Byzantine depictions, its Norman palatine church context endows it with similar courtly connotations.

The Artukid bowl can be compared, as well, with the recently published silver plate from the Treasure of the Ob' Basin; the plate is now in the Shuryshkar Regional Historical Museum Complex in Muzhi, a branch of the Yamalo-Nenets District Museum in Salekhard in Siberia (fig. 7).³⁰ The decoration on the plate consists of a central repoussé medallion with the Ascension of Alexander the Great and a border of ten engraved medallions, set against a background of vine ornament. The subjects of the border medallions include: personifications of the sun and moon; King David playing the psaltery; Bellerophon astride Pegasus; and battle scenes with horses and swordsmen. The majority of the stylistic and iconographic features of the plate indicate a Byzantine provenance, or a production site in an area under strong Byzantine influence. Some of the decorative elements, however, are clearly Western. Therefore, it seems quite probable that a Byzantine craftsman made the plate for a Western client sometime after the Fall of Constantinople in 1204.

Another group of courtly images on the plate consists of entertainers, including female dancers, dancing female musicians,

and acrobats. Three musicians (playing flutes and lutes) and two dancers (one holding a veil and the other wearing a costume with long sleeves) decorate the Artukid bowl. The stylistic similarities between the dancers on the Artukid bowl and the dancers on the famous Monomachos crown (see figs. 2–3 in the essay on the crown, above) have been discussed extensively in the literature.³¹ These similarities are not coincidental; numerous analogous depictions of dancers and acrobats demonstrate that such images were a basic component of the courtly iconography of Middle Byzantine art. An examination of several representations of dance will help define the use of the term “courtly” to describe these images, which, based on Antique prototypes, were produced throughout the centuries prior to Iconoclasm,³² and, after, appeared on objects of the “Macedonian Renaissance.” The well-known Veroli casket in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London is such a work from the Macedonian period. Produced in tenth-century Constantinople, it originally was intended as a bridal gift.³³ Features that distinguish this casket as an example of secular luxury were include the use of exclusive materials, the high quality of craftsmanship, and the representation of *topoi* from pagan mythology relevant only for a specific social stratum. The classical motifs are not indicative of a widespread tendency toward a renaissance of ancient art but, rather, they testify to a kind of classicizing “fashion” in elite secular luxury articles—a distinct category of objects. As these objects were commissioned by and for the court and its members, for non-religious purposes, the most appropriate term to describe them is “courtly.”³⁴

The Byzantines believed that the emperor derived his power from God and was God’s representative on earth. They viewed the imperial court as the earthly image of Heavenly Jerusalem. Although such spiritual notions underlie the iconography and style of much of Byzantine imperial art, some outstanding works from the “Macedonian Renaissance” that we label as courtly art



Figure 4. Relief of the Ascension of Alexander the Great. Byzantine, 12th century. Marble. North façade, Basilica of San Marco, Venice

Figure 5. Relief of an eagle grasping a snake. Byzantine, 12th century. Marble. North façade, Basilica of San Marco, Venice





Figure 6. Medallion, with the Ascension of Alexander the Great, on the Pala d'Oro. Byzantine, 2nd half of the 11th century. Cloisonné enamel on gilded silver. Treasury of San Marco, Venice

do not exhibit any traces of religious concerns. Indeed, they convey an entirely different quality that in Byzantium was genuinely imperial, but lacked theological dimensions. While classicizing and Orientalizing subjects with a secular content were deemed appropriate for courtly objects,³⁵ certain courtly motifs, such as dance, were appropriated and disseminated in Christian iconography to illustrate biblical events when they could be justified through a biblical citation, thereby eclipsing their primary secular connotations. Illustrations of the Dance of Miriam appeared for the first time in Byzantine manuscripts that postdated the Iconoclastic controversy—as, for example, in the margins of ninth-century monastic psalters, such as the Pantokrator Psalter (Mount Athos, Pantokrator Monastery, 61, fol. 206r)³⁶ and the Khludov Psalter (Moscow, State Historical Museum, GIM 86795 or Khlud. 129-d, fol. 148v), in which Miriam is shown in purple court dress;³⁷ the Liturgical Homilies

of Saint Gregory of Nazianzos (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Ms. gr. 510, fol. 264v), a manuscript with aristocratic origins, dated to the early 880s;³⁸ and the tenth-century Paris Psalter (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Ms. gr. 139, fol. 5v), the most important extant Byzantine aristocratic psalter, in which a scantily clad female dancer representing “Virgo Israel” dominates the scene of David’s triumphal entrance into Jerusalem following the battle with the Philistines (fig. 8).³⁹ The inclusion of an illustration of dance, rendered in a secular manner in such manuscripts as the Paris Psalter—a masterpiece of the “Macedonian Renaissance” that, undoubtedly, was commissioned by the court—underscores the “courtly” associations of this subject.⁴⁰ The dance of “Virgo Israel” before the victorious David is by no coincidence the archetype of the acclamation of the Christian ruler. The only preserved illuminated Byzantine manuscript containing the entire Books of Kings (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ms. Vat. gr. 333; twelfth century) also displays a miniature of David’s triumphal entrance into Jerusalem on the recto of folio 24.⁴¹ The image consists of a group of eight young women, with castanets and wind instruments, dancing in a circle. The composition, as well as the number of dancers represented and their poses, find parallels in contemporary illustrations of dance. On the recto of folio 46 of the same manuscript, David, wearing a garment with long sleeves that cover his hands, dances before the Ark of the Covenant, which is being transported on an ox-drawn cart to Jerusalem (fig. 9). Another example of a “sleeve dancer” appears in a twelfth-century miniature of the New Testament scene of the Mocking of Christ (Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Ms. VI.23, fol. 58r). Together with tuba players positioned in the background, soldiers mimicking “sleeve dancers” ridicule and humiliate Christ, the “King of the Jews,” as he receives his crown of thorns in two early-fourteenth-century frescoes, one in the Hilandar Monastery on



Figure 7. Plate, with the Ascension of Alexander the Great, King David, Bellerophon on Pegasus, personifications of the sun and the moon, and battle scenes. Crusader, about 1208–16. Silver, with a repoussé medallion and engravings: Diameter, 28 cm. Shuryshkar Regional Historical Museum Complex, Muzhi (a branch of the Yamalo-Nenets District Museum, Salekhard), Siberia (OF 798)

Mount Athos and the other in the Church of Saint George in Staro Nagoričino in Macedonia. The iconography of the frescoes obviously reflects Byzantine court ceremony. The motif of the “sleeve dancer” became an established element of Byzantine courtly iconography beginning in the twelfth century.

David is depicted in the guise of a Byzantine emperor in miniatures that also portray him as a liturgist accompanied by choirs of singers, musicians, and dancers; he is thereby presented as both a king and a prophet inspired by God, as well as the forebear of Christ and the prototype of the

Christian ruler. The oldest such image appears in a copy of the *Christian Topography* of Kosmas Indikopleustes (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ms. Vat. gr. 699, fol. 63v).⁴² Two youths with veils dance before the enthroned David and his son, Solomon, standing by his side. In the eleventh-century Barberini Psalter (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ms. Vat. Barb. gr. 372), the frontispiece illustration, which follows a miniature of the crowning of the imperial family, consists of three zones: In the top zone, the enthroned Christ raises his right hand in benediction; in the middle zone, David, dressed in imperial costume and holding a psaltery, dictates the Psalms to two court figures; and in the bottom zone, a woman, positioned directly below David and wearing a purple dress, dances amid six musicians.⁴³

The Dance of Miriam, associated with the story of the Crossing of the Red Sea, illustrates the First Ode in many eleventh- and twelfth-century illuminated psalters. As the popularity of this subject increased, it was elaborated upon until it surpassed in detail the text it was meant to illustrate. Eventually, the depiction of the Crossing was omitted, and the scene of Miriam's dance, on its own, became the introductory image for the Odes. The portrayal of Miriam dancing, which first appeared in ninth-century marginal psalters, was expanded to include groups of female dancers; for example, in the miniature illustrating the First Ode in the Barberini Psalter (fol. 249r), Miriam, wearing a purple dress, is shown in the company of four female musicians who are not mentioned in the biblical text.⁴⁴ The complex miniature illustrating the First Ode in the Vatican Psalter (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ms. Vat. gr. 752, fol. 449v) (fig. 10) presents an impressive interpretation of courtly dance. The full-page illumination, a circular composition, includes fourteen women in courtly dress dancing in a ring around the eight male liturgists whom David ordered to lead the choirs in the temple, but who are not indicated in the First Ode. The biblical text, which recounts the story of

Miriam's praise (Exodus 15: 20), specifies dancers as well as drummers but no other musicians, therefore not sufficiently explaining the miniature. However, the supplemental citations included among the inscriptions within the illumination help to clarify the imagery and its connection to King David; they associate the miniature with the story of Miriam, as well as with the One-hundred-and-fiftieth Psalm and with Pseudo-Chrysostomos's prologue to the Psalms, which is also part of the manuscript. The latter two texts refer to choirs that gather to sing, play music, and dance in praise of the Lord. In the miniature illustrating the apocryphal One-hundred-and-fifty-first Psalm, which appears on the recto of folio 449 of the Vatican Psalter, directly preceding the miniature for the First Ode, the dancing figure of "Virgo Israel" clad in courtly dress receives David after the defeat of the Philistines. Thus, King David, as the prototype of a Middle Byzantine emperor, is being honored by a performance of a dance in accordance with Byzantine ceremonial practices.

The female dancers on the Monomachos crown (1042–50) in the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum in Budapest provide the most important parallel to those on the Artukid bowl (see figs. 2–3 in the essay on the crown, above).⁴⁵ The dancing figures on both works assume similar poses and display identical decorative details, such as the spiral forms of the drapery folds defining their knees and the heart patterns decorating their costumes,⁴⁶ however, the dancers on the Monomachos crown are haloed. The imperial portraits on the Monomachos crown reveal that the subject of the overall decorative program is the Byzantine court and its ceremony. The halos, costumes, and poses of the figures reflect the Byzantine-Christian concept of the emperor as the earthly representative of God. Although the dancers do not hold drums or cymbals as the biblical text specifies, they usually are regarded as an allusion to the Israelite virgins who appeared before David after his victory over the Philistines.⁴⁷ Images

of the emperor with court dancers reveal a strong continuity with the pagan past and cannot be interpreted exclusively along biblical lines. The intent probably was to legitimize Byzantine traditions of glorifying the emperor through an association with King David. Dancers and musicians were components of representations of imperial ceremonies, from as early as the fourth century; images of them appear on the southeast side of the base of the Obelisk of Theodosios (390–95) in the Hippodrome of Constantinople. Later examples include the frescoes executed between 1113 and 1125 by Byzantine artists in the stairwell of the Sviata Sofiia Cathedral in Kyiv⁴⁸ and an ivory pyxis dated to 1403 in the Dumbarton Oaks Collections in Washington, D.C. (fig. 11).⁴⁹ The pyxis shows the *adventus* of John VII Palaiologos (r. 1390) into Thessalonike in the (fictitious) presence of the emperor Manuel II Palaiologos (r. 1391–1425) and the imperial family. Dancers and musicians dominate the composition. Although their inclusion has been interpreted as a biblical reference to Psalm 150,⁵⁰ this is not supported by any literary source and may be explained in the light of such secular texts as the account of a reception in the Hall of the Nineteen Couches written by Liutprand of Cremona (about 920–72).⁵¹ The Artukid bowl, produced about two centuries after Liutprand of Cremona's work appeared, captures the very same atmosphere described in his text.

Decorative details in Byzantine manuscripts also integrate images of dance and acrobatics, thereby reflecting the courtly esteem for elegant and sometimes manneristic refinements. A manuscript from the second quarter of the twelfth century (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms. Auct. T. inf. 1.10, Misc. 136) shows the two bishops Eusebios and Karpianos on the verso of folio 16, standing within a richly ornamented architectural frame; acrobats, dancing musicians, and “sleeve dancers” are depicted on the bases and capitals of the columns.⁵² Such drollery figures also decorate the capitals and bases



Figure 8. The Dance of “Virgo Israel” during David’s Triumphal Entrance into Jerusalem Following the Battle with the Philistines. Illumination from the Paris Psalter. Byzantine, 2nd half of the 10th century. Tempera and gold leaf on vellum: 37 x 26.5 cm. Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris (Ms. gr. 139, fol. 5v)

of columns framing the canon tables in a manuscript in Venice (Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Ms. gr. Z 540).⁵³ Numerous initial letters are composed of dancers and acrobats, and these contribute to the courtly tone of two copies of the Liturgical Homilies of Saint Gregory of Nazianzos, a late-eleventh-century manuscript in Turin (University Library, Ms. C.I.6),⁵⁴ and a twelfth-century



Figure 9. David Dancing before the Ark of the Covenant. Illumination from a manuscript of the Books of Kings. Byzantine, 12th century. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City (Vat. gr. 333, fol. 46r)

version in Paris (Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Ms. gr. 550).⁵⁵

In addition to the images of female dancers, the decoration on the Monomachos crown includes birds perched on foliate branches to evoke either the luxurious courtly ambience of a garden filled with exotic birds⁵⁶ or the pomp of the imperial palace with its mechanical birds in gold trees. Such magnificent palace adornments are first documented during the reign of Emperor Theophilos (r. 829–42): According to Leo Grammatikos (early eleventh century), the emperor commissioned a tree of gold inhabited by birds that warbled by means of some mechanical musical device, as well as two enormous organs of pure gold adorned with various precious stones and glass.⁵⁷ Emperor Michael III (r. 842–67) had the tree melted down, along with two gold lions, two gold griffins, and a gold organ, in order to mint

coins.⁵⁸ In the court of the ‘Abassid caliph al-Muqradir (r. 908–32), two rows of hydraulically movable mechanical horsemen flanked a pool with fountains, which dispensed perfumed water; in the center of the pool stood a gold-and-silver tree on which artificial birds fluttered and sang.⁵⁹ Such accounts indicate the existence of a rivalry between the Byzantine and Islamic courts, and attest to the continuous mutual influence they exerted upon each other. It was only after viewing the marvels of the ‘Abassid palace that the Byzantine envoys of Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos (r. 945–59) were permitted to meet with the caliph and conduct their business.⁶⁰ According to the ambassador Liutprand of Cremona, who describes his audience with Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos and a banquet in the palace, the Byzantine emperor sat on a hydraulic throne “made in such a cunning manner that at one

moment it was down on the ground, while at another it rose higher and was seen to be up in the air. This throne was of immense size and was, as it were, guarded by lions, made either of bronze or wood covered with gold, which struck the ground with their tails and roared with open mouth and quivering tongue.” A tree of gilded bronze with birds singing in a manner appropriate to their different species stood in front of the emperor’s throne.⁶¹ Like the Monomachos crown, the Artukid bowl is decorated with birds amidst foliate vines, and evokes a courtly ambience.

The Artukid bowl displays iconographic, typological, decorative, and stylistic elements current in Byzantine art of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Strong parallels exist with enamels of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and especially with the medallions of the Pala d’Oro and the plaques of the Monomachos crown. In common are the heart-shaped motifs that decorate the garments;⁶² the scroll-like stylization of the drapery folds around the knees and elbows;⁶³ and the stepped-diamond⁶⁴ and volute⁶⁵ and vine-like ornamental patterns.⁶⁶ These motifs were not restricted to enamels, but are found on works in other mediums as well. For example, in the author portrait of Saint Gregory of Nazianzos, on the verso of folio 4 of the mid-twelfth-century Liturgical Homilies of Saint Gregory of Nazianzos (Sinai, Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Ms. gr. 339), the stepped-diamond pattern on the halo of the saint is identical to that on the Artukid bowl.⁶⁷

It is noteworthy that while comparisons of the Artukid bowl with the mid-twelfth-century *muqarnas* ceiling of the Cappella Palatina in Palermo or with thirteenth-century Islamic metal and ceramic vessels reveal thematic affinities, they do not disclose stylistic similarities.⁶⁸ Nevertheless, because of its inscriptions, the Artukid bowl is usually classified as a work of Islamic art. Such an assumption recognizes the bowl as the only surviving evidence of an Islamic tradition of

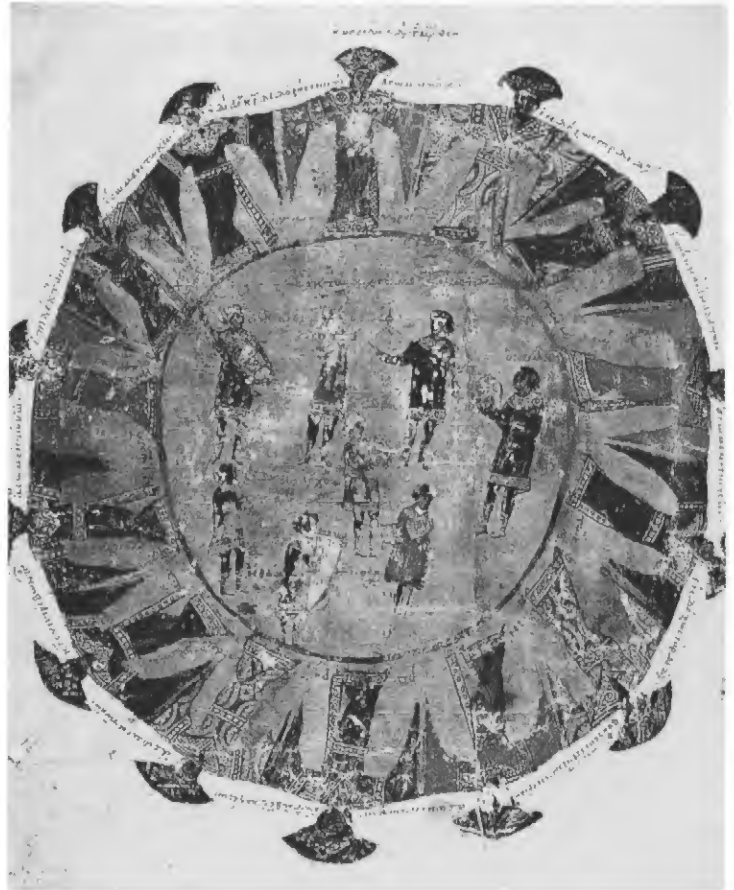


Figure 10. The Dance of Miriam and the Israelite Women. Illumination from the Vatican Psalter. Byzantine, 1059. Tempera on vellum: 33 x 27 cm. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City (Vat. gr. 752, fol. 449v)

cloisonné-enamel production,⁶⁹ for there is no textual evidence of Islamic cloisonné enamel work.

Since comparisons exist only among contemporary Byzantine objects, it seems logical to conclude that the Artukid bowl was produced in a Byzantine workshop. The artistic quality, size, concave form, and double-sided enameling technique of the bowl all required the highest degree of



Figure 11. Pyxis, with a relief of the *adventus* of John VII Palaiologos into Thessalonike. Byzantine, 1403. Ivory. Dumbarton Oaks Library and Collections, Washington, D.C.

technological expertise, craftsmanship, and artistry—qualities dependent on a long tradition of producing enamels. Only a workshop located in an environment where commissions were plentiful could have access to the financial means necessary to produce such high-quality enamels.

The assumption that gold alone was used in Byzantine cloisonné-enamelled works is unfounded, as gilded silver often served as the base metal, and sometimes copper was employed for both the base material and the partitions.⁷⁰ Nikodim P. Kondakov identified the late-eleventh- or early-twelfth-century medallion depicting Saint Theodore, which once decorated the frame of a repoussé icon of the archangel Gabriel (originally in the Djumati Monastery in Georgia and now in the Georgian State Art Museum in Tbilisi), as made of copper,⁷¹ but he never doubted the Byzantine provenance of the medallion. Also, on the basis of stylistic similarities with the eleventh-century enamels on the Holy Crown of Hungary, Klaus Wessel affirmed

the Constantinopolitan origin of the copper-based, double-sided enamelled medallion depicting Saints Basil and Nicholas, now in the Dumbarton Oaks Collections in Washington, D.C.⁷² Furthermore, there is an early-twelfth-century, double-sided, copper, cloisonné-enamelled medallion in the Musée du Louvre with a Gorgon's head against a background of foliate vines, and framed by an inscription along the edge on the obverse and an inscription in majuscule, surrounded by an ornamental band similar to that on the Artukid bowl, on the reverse.⁷³ While this medallion, which probably functioned as an amulet, bears similarities to the Artukid bowl, it is a work of lesser quality and may have been produced in a provincial workshop.

Due to the difference in quality of these two comparatively rare, copper-based cloisonné works, the common Palestinian provenance proposed by Margaret Frazer seems unlikely.⁷⁴ However, the medallion at Dumbarton Oaks, although also not of the same quality as the Artukid bowl, through its affinities to the enamels on the Holy Crown of Hungary establishes that copper and silver, like gold, frequently were employed in the production of enamel works in twelfth- and thirteenth-century Constantinople. Two other copper-based, double-sided, cloisonné-enamelled medallions depicting Saints Basil and Nicholas,⁷⁵ and Saints George and Theodore,⁷⁶ now in the British Museum, reveal the same quality of execution as the medallion at Dumbarton Oaks;⁷⁷ they date to the twelfth century, and their color scheme and ornamental style are closely related to those of the Artukid bowl. Moreover, the similar facial features of Saint George and of Alexander do not rule out a mutual provenance within the same workshop. The base and partitions for double-sided cloisonné enamel works probably were made of copper due to technical rather than financial constraints. Any measure of frugality would have conflicted with the demands of executing an exceptionally large and technically demanding two-sided, curved enamel vessel.

Although, in his *De ceremoniis*, Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos notes that enamels adorned the imperial palace (χύμευσος, or ἔργα χυμετά), and were given as gifts to “barbarian” rulers, there is no evidence in literary sources that Byzantine court workshops accepted commissions from foreign, non-Christian rulers.⁷⁸ It seems that enamels were made mainly for the Byzantine court. Therefore, it is possible that the Artukid bowl was a gift from the Byzantine court to a foreign ruler, for it is known that Byzantine emperors honored foreign rulers with crowns and other symbols of power.⁷⁹ Each of the extant Byzantine crowns (all women’s crowns) originally served this purpose;⁸⁰ they signified the relationship between the Byzantine emperor and the recipient of his gift. Enameled works of art were presented to Christian as well as to Muslim rulers.⁸¹ However, as the latter were not part of the ecumenical Christian society and the acknowledged “Family of Kings,” they were never honored with crowns. The Artukid bowl, while functionally not comparable to a crown, was still a valuable and costly work with courtly associations, and may have enjoyed comparable importance as a Byzantine diplomatic gift. In any case, it represents an exceptional link between Byzantine and Islamic culture.

1. I would like to express my warmest gratitude to Professors Marcell Restle and George Galavaris for their helpful suggestions, and to Professor Paul von Naredi-Rainer for his support. My sincere thanks go to Matthew Savage for his help with the translation of this article.
2. Josef von Lemmen zu Linsingburg, of the episcopal consistory of the Archdiocese of Brixen, donated the Artukid bowl to the Tiroler Landesmuseum in 1825, in lieu of his yearly dues. The earlier history of the bowl is unknown. The most important publications to deal with the Artukid bowl include: Gaston Migeon, *Manuel d’art musulman*, vol. 2, *Les Arts plastiques et industriels* (Paris: A. Picard, 1907), pp. 155 f., fig. 138; Otto von Falke, “Kupferschmelz im Orient und Byzanz,” *Monatshefte für Kunstwissenschaft* 2 (1909), pp. 234–41; Max van Berchem and Joseph Strzygowski, *Amida* (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1910), pp. 121–28, pl. 21, pp. 348–54, fig. 295; Fredrik R. Martin and Friedrich Sarre, *Die Ausstellung von*

- Meisterwerken muhammedanischer Kunst in München*, vol. 2 (Munich: F. Bruckmann, 1912), pl. 159; Alois Riegl, *Die spätromische Kunstindustrie nach den Funden in Österreich-Ungarn*, vol. 2, *Kunstgewerbe des frühen Mittelalters* (Vienna: K. K. Hof- und Staatsdruckerei, 1923), fig. 48; Heinrich Glück and Ernst Dietz, *Die Kunst des Islam* (Berlin: Propyläen Verlag, 1925), p. 583, figs. 452, 453; K. Zimmeter, “Die Kunstgewerblichen Sammlungen,” *Heft Tirol* 12/13 (1930), pp. 23–26; Magda Bárányné-Oberschall, *Konstantinos Monomachos császár koronája/The Crown of the Emperor Constantine Monomachos*, *Archaeologia Hungaricae* 22 (Budapest: Magyar Történeti Múzeum, 1937), pp. 75–78, pl. 16; Leo A. Mayer, “A Glass Bottle of the Atabak Zangi,” *Iraq* 6 (1939), p. 101; Hugo Buchthal, “A Note on Islamic Enameled Metalwork and its Influence in the Latin West,” *Ars Islamica* 11/12 (1946), pp. 195–98, fig. 2; Josef Deér, *Die heilige Krone Ungarns* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1966), pp. 104, 111, 147, 174, 176, figs. 159, 169, 252; Janine Sourdel-Thomine and Bertold Spuler, *Die Kunst des Islam*, Propyläen Kunstgeschichte 4 (Berlin: Propyläen Verlag, 1973), pp. 303 f., pl. 42; Chiara Settis-Frugoni, *Historia Alexandri elevati per griphos ad aerem: Origine, iconografia e fortuna di un tema* (Rome: Istituto storico italiano per il Medio Evo, 1973); Tilman Seebass, *Musikdarstellung und Psalterillustration in frühen Mittelalter* (Bern: Francke, 1973), pp. 162–64, fig. 130; Vladislav P. Darkevich, *Svetskoe iskusstvo Vizantinii. Proizvedeniia vizantiniiskogo khudozhestvennogo remesla v Vostochnoi Evrope X–XIII vv.* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1975); Daria Jones and George Michell, eds., *The Arts of Islam* (London: The Arts Council of Great Britain, 1976), no. 238, p. 201; Titus Burckhardt, ed., *Art of Islam: Language and Meaning* (Westerham, England: World of Islam Festival Trust, 1976), p. 114, pl. 97; Richard Ettinghausen and Oleg Grabar, *The Art and Architecture of Islam, 650–1250* (New Haven and London: Penguin, 1987), p. 362, pl. 384; Gereon Sievernich and Hendrik Budde, eds., *Europa und der Orient* (Gütersloh, Germany: Bertelsmann Lexikon Verlag, 1989), pp. 514 f., no. 1/255; Scott Redford, “How Islamic is it? The Innsbruck Plate and its Setting,” *Muqarnas* 7 (1990), pp. 119–35; Margaret E. Frazer, “The Alexander Plate in Innsbruck and its Companion Pieces: East of Byzantium?,” *Jewellery Studies* 3 (1989), pp. 86 ff.; Thomas Steppan, ed., *Die Artukiden-Schale im Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum Innsbruck: Mittelalterliche Emailkunst zwischen Orient und Occident* (Munich: Editio Maris, 1995).
3. V. P. Darkevich was the first to recognize parallels between the bowl and works of Byzantine secular art. See Vladislav P. Darkevich, *Svetskoe iskusstvo Vizantinii. Proizvedeniia vizantiniiskogo khudozhestvennogo remesla v Vostochnoi Evrope X–XIII vv.* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1975), pp. 100–117.
 4. Even the largest enameled plaques from the Pala

- d'Oro in the Basilica of San Marco, Venice, or from the Khakhuli Triptych in the Georgian State Art Museum, Tbilisi, do not approach the Artukid bowl in size.
5. Several areas preserve the original gilding.
 6. If one were to connect opposite images on the middle band, the result would generate twelve axes, which would appear to divide the central medallion into twelve equal sections of a circle. The focal point would be located exactly where the hands of Alexander meet, and would correspond to the center of the bowl. Remarkably, the head of Alexander fits exactly into one of the 30-degree sections, while the base of Alexander's chariot occupies the opposite segment of the circle.
 7. The narrow border of volute-like ornament positioned between the Alexander medallion and the middle band with six medallions resembles a strip of ball bearings, and intensifies the impression of circular motion.
 8. The Artukids were descendants of the Oghuz and therefore were of Turkish origin. In 1104/5, Sökmen declared himself an independent prince and ruled over the areas around Amida, Hisn Kayfa, Mayyafariqin (Martyropolis), and Mardin. His son, Rukn ad-Dawla Dā'ūd, is undoubtedly the figure named on the Artukid bowl. On the history of the Artukids see Carol Hillenbrand, "The Establishment of Artukid Power in Diyār Bakr in the Twelfth Century," *Studia Islamica* 54 (1981), pp. 129–53.
 9. The inscription reads, "al-amīr, al-isfahsalār al-kabīr al-mu'ayyad al-mansūr nāsir al-dīn rukn ad-dawla wa-samsām al-milla wa-bahā' al-umma za'īm al-ğuyūš tağ al-mulūk wa-s-salātīn qātil al-kafara wa-l-mušrikīn alb sawiḡ sunqur bag abā [sic] Sulaimān Dāwud [sic] ibn Artuq saif amīr al-mu'minīn" ("The great Prince and Field Marshal, who is given strength and victory [by God], Nāsir ad-Dīn [Giver of victory to the Faith] Rukn al-Dawla [Pillar of the Dynasty], Saber of the Congregation, Splendor of the Community [of Believers], Leader of Armies, Crown of Kings and Sultans, Slayer of Infidels and Polytheists, Alp-Sevinç Sonqur-Beg Abū Sulaimān Dā'ūd, Son of Artuk, Sword of the Prince of Believers"). On the inscription see Lutz Richter-Bernburg, "Zu den Inschriften der Alexanderschale des Artuqidemirs Rukn ad-Dawla Dā'ūd b. Sökmen," in *Die Artuqid-Schale im Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum Innsbruck: Mittelalterliche Emailkunst zwischen Orient und Occident*, ed. Thomas Steppan (Munich: Editio Maris, 1995), p. 39; The inscription was first published in Max van Berchem and Joseph Strzygowski, *Amida* (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1910).
 10. See Lutz Richter-Bernburg, "Zu den Inschriften der Alexanderschale des Artuqidemirs Rukn ad-Dawla Dā'ūd b. Sökmen," in *Die Artuqid-Schale im Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum Innsbruck: Mittelalterliche Emailkunst zwischen Orient und Occident*, ed. Thomas Steppan (Munich: Editio Maris, 1995), p. 42 f.
 11. Protocol required the inclusion of the title of the office, the Islamic honorific, the *Kunya* ("father of . . ."), the given name, the patronymics, and a declaration of loyalty to the Baghdad caliph.
 12. Benedictions included in *epitheta ornantia* refer to the military rank of the emir and his importance to the Faith; see Lutz Richter-Bernburg, "Zu den Inschriften der Alexanderschale des Artuqidemirs Rukn ad-Dawla Dā'ūd b. Sökmen," in *Die Artuqid-Schale im Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum Innsbruck: Mittelalterliche Emailkunst zwischen Orient und Occident*, ed. Thomas Steppan (Munich: Editio Maris, 1995), p. 41.
 13. See Wolfgang Fritz Volbach, "Gli smalti della Pala d'oro," in *La Pala d'oro*, 2nd ed., eds. Hans R. Hahnloser and Renato Polacco (Venice: Canal & Stamperia, 1994), pp. 69 ff.
 14. See Andreas Stylianou and Judith Stylianou, *The Painted Churches of Cyprus* (Nicosia: Research Center, Greek Communal Chamber, 1964), pp. 257 ff.
 15. See Rodolfo Gallo, *Il Tesoro di San Marco* (Venice: Istituto per la collaborazione culturale e la sua storia, 1967), pl. 37, fig. 65; David Talbot Rice, *Kunst aus Byzanz* (Munich: Hirmer, 1959), p. 70; Wolfgang Fritz Volbach and Jacqueline Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Byzanz und der christliche Osten*, Propyläen Kunstgeschichte 3 (Berlin: Propyläen Verlag, 1968), p. 199, pl. 25.
 16. Pseudo-Kallisthenes II, 41. On works with this subject see Chiara Settis-Frugoni, *Historia Alexandri elevati per griphos ad aerem: Origine, iconografia e fortuna di un tema* (Rome: Istituto storico italiano per il Medio Evo, 1973); *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunstgeschichte*, vol. 1, s.v. "Alexander der Große," col. 98; Thomas Steppan, "Die Artuqid-Schale. Emailkunst im Spannungsfeld byzantinischer und islamischer Kultur," in *Die Artuqid-Schale im Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum Innsbruck: Mittelalterliche Emailkunst zwischen Orient und Occident*, ed. Thomas Steppan (Munich: Editio Maris, 1995), p. 13.
 17. Hessisches Landesmuseum, Darmstadt, Inv. no. 33.36. See also Adolph Goldschmidt and Kurt Weitzmann, *Die byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen des X.–XII. Jahrhunderts*, vol. 1, *Kästen* (1930; reprinted, Berlin: Deutscher Verlag für Kunstwissenschaft, 1979), no. 125 d.
 18. See Anastasios K. Orlandos, "Neon anaglyphon tes analepseos tou Alexandrou," in *Epistemonike Epeteris tes Philosophikes Scholes tou Panepistemiou Athenon*, Aphieroma eis Nikolaon Exarchopoulon, ser. 2, vol. 5 (1954/55), p. 281.
 19. Both are *spolia* used in the fourteenth century for the building of churches. See Chiara Settis-Frugoni, *Historia Alexandri elevati per griphos ad aerem: Origine, iconografia e fortuna di un tema* (Rome: Istituto storico italiano per il Medio Evo, 1973), pp. 165 ff.
 20. See Otto Demus, *The Church of San Marco in Venice: History, Architecture, Sculpture*, Dumbarton Oaks Studies 6 (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collections, 1960), p. III, pl. 33. Étienne Coche de la Ferté, *Byzantinische Kunst* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1982), p. 219.

21. See Chiara Settis-Frugoni, *Historia Alexandri elevati per griphos ad aerem: Origine, iconografia e fortuna di un tema* (Rome: Istituto storico italiano per il Medio Evo, 1973), pp. 169 f.
22. See Fulvio Zuliani, *I Marmi di San Marco: Uno studio ed un catalogo della scultura ornamentale marciana fino all'XI secolo*, *Alto Medioevo 2* (Venice: Centro internazionale delle arti e del costume, 1970), plates 134, 139, 141.
23. See Hans R. Hahnloser and Renato Polacco, eds., *La Pala d'oro*, 2nd ed. (Venice: Canal & Stamperia, 1994), no. 152, pl. 57.
24. See Magdalena Stancheva, *Razkazi za Veliki Preslav* (Sofia: Zlatostrouy, 1993), pp. 80 f.
25. See Josef Deér, "Mittelalterliche Frauenkronen in Ost und West," in *Herrschaftszeichen und Staatssymbolik*, ed. Percy Ernst Schramm, vol. 2, *Schriften der Monumenta Germaniae Historica 13*, part 2 (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1955), pp. 437 f., pl. 60 c; Chiara Settis-Frugoni, *Historia Alexandri elevati per griphos ad aerem: Origine, iconografia e fortuna di un tema* (Rome: Istituto storico italiano per il Medio Evo, 1973), p. 174, fig. 48. The simplistic rendering of the stocky griffins on the plaques of the diadem from Sakhnivka seems provincial in comparison with the images on the Artukid bowl. (The diadem is now in the collection of the Muzei Istorychnykh Koshtovnostei Ukrainy in Kyiv.)
26. See André Grabar, "Le Succès des arts orientaux à la cour byzantine sous les Macédoniens," *Münchener Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst*, ser. 3, 2 (1951), pp. 47 ff, figs. 10 a-c, 11 a-c.
27. The lines used to define the various body parts and musculature of the animals, such as those on the legs, belly, wing, and between the neck and head, are similar in both works.
28. See Hans R. Hahnloser and Renato Polacco, eds., *La Pala d'oro*, 2nd ed. (Venice: Canal & Stamperia, 1994), pl. 57, figs. 148–150.
29. See Richard Ettinghausen, "Painting in the Fatimid Period: a Reconstruction," *Ars Islamica* 9 (1942), pp. 115 f.
30. See Boris Marshak and Mark Kramarovsky, *Sokrovishcha Priob'ia* (Saint Petersburg: Formika, 1996), no. 69, pp. 149–61, 221 f.
31. The two objects were first compared in Magda Bárányiné-Oberschall, *Konstantinos Monomachos császár koronája/The Crown of the Emperor Constantine Monomachos*, *Archaeologia Hungaricae* 22 (Budapest: Magyar Történeti Múzeum, 1937), p. 77.
32. From the earliest centuries, in eschatologically oriented Christendom, the practice of dance was considered reprehensible. Nevertheless, pagan traditions and rites involving dance continued to be depicted in Byzantine works replete with classical mythological content. Images of dance can be seen on pre-Iconoclastic ivories, bone carvings, silver metalwork, and textiles (for example, the fourth-century silver plate with a satyr and a maenad, from the Mildenhall Treasure, now in the British Museum in London; the silver misorium of the emperor Theodosios, dated to 388, now in the Academia de la Historia, Madrid; the fourth-century silver plate showing the procession of Cybele and Attis, from Parabiago, now in the Pinacoteca Brera, Milan; and the silver plate with Silenus and a maenad dancing, dated between 613 and 629, now in The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg). See Ernst Kitzinger, *Byzantine Art in the Making* (London: Faber and Faber, 1977), pp. 30, 32, 35, 108 f., plates 53, 57, 59, 66, 192.
33. See Adolph Goldschmidt and Kurt Weitzmann, *Die byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen des X.–XII. Jahrhunderts*, vol. 1, *Kästen* (1930; reprinted, Berlin: Deutscher Verlag für Kunstwissenschaft, 1979), p. 30, no. 21 a–e, plates 9, 10. Whether it really shows a unified program of the late-classical, fifth-century epic of *Dionysiaka* of Nonnos remains questionable. See Erika Simon, "Nonnos und das Elfenbeinkästchen aus Veroli," *Jahrbuch des deutschen archäologischen Instituts* 79 (1964), pp. 279–336; Hans Belting, "Kunst oder Objekt-Stil. Fragen zu Funktion der 'Kunst' in der 'Makedonischen Renaissance,'" in *Byzanz und der Westen*, ed. Irmgard Hutter (Vienna: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1984), p. 73.
34. See Marcell Restle, "Höfische Kunst in Konstantinopel in der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit," in *Höfische Kultur in Südosteuropa. Bericht der Kolloquien der Südosteuropa-Kommission* (1988–1990), eds. Reinhard Lauer and Hans G. Majer (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994), pp. 25–41.
35. An example is the tenth-century enameled glass bowl with mythological subjects and pseudo-Kufic inscriptions in the Treasury of San Marco, Venice. The bowl is discussed in Anthony Cutler, "The 'Mythological' Bowl in the Treasury of San Marco at Venice," in *Near Eastern Numismatics, Iconography, Epigraphy and History: Studies in Honor of George C. Miles*, ed. Dickran K. Kouymjian (Beirut: American University, 1974), pp. 235–54; and Hans R. Hahnloser, *Il Tesoro di San Marco*, vol. 2, *Il Tesoro e il Museo* (Florence: Sansoni, 1971), no. 83, plates 67, 68. The latter study offers important parallels for the interpretation of the Artukid bowl.
36. See Paul Huber, *Athos. Leben, Glaube, Kunst* (Zürich: Atlantis, 1982), pp. 148–66, pl. 43; Stylianos M. Pelekanides, Panagiotes K. Christou, Chrysoulla Maupoulou-Tsioume, and Sotiris N. Kadas, *Hoi Thesouroi tou Hagiou Orous*, vol. 1, *Eikonographemena cheiographa* (Athens: Ekdotike Athenon, 1979), p. 279, pl. 233.
37. See Marta Viacheslavovna Shchepkina, *Miniatiury Khludovskoi psaltyri: grecheskii illiustrirovannyi kodeks IX veka* (Moscow: Iskustvo, 1977).
38. See Sirarpie Der Nersessian, "The Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962), pp. 197–228, pl. 2.
39. 1 Kings 18: 6. Although in aristocratic psalters the scene from the Life of David represented in the miniature precedes the text, it has no direct connection to it.

40. The luxury manuscript was produced in a leading Constantinopolitan workshop and displays many classicizing features.
41. See Jean Lassus, *L'Illustration byzantine du Livre des Rois, Vaticanus graecus 333*, Bibliothèque des Cahiers Archéologiques 9 (Paris: Klincksieck, 1973).
42. See Cosimo Stornajolo, *Le Miniature della Topografia cristiana di Cosma Indicopleuste, codice vaticano greco 699* (Milan: U. Hoepli, 1908); Cosmas Indicopleustes, *Topographie chrétienne*, vol. 2, book 5, ed. Wanda Wolska-Conus, Sources chrétiennes 159 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1970), p. 73; Doula Mouriki-Charalambous, "The Oktateuch Miniatures of the Byzantine Manuscripts of Cosmas Indicopleustes" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1970); Leslie Brubaker, "The Relation of Text and Image in the Byzantine Manuscript of Cosmas Indicopleustes," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 70 (1977), pp. 42–57.
43. See Jeffrey C. Anderson, Paul Canart, and Christopher Walter, *The Barberini Psalter. Codex Vaticanus Barberinianus Graecus 372* (Zürich and New York: 1989); *Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana*, eds. A. M. Stickler and L. E. Boyle (Stuttgart and Zürich: Belser, 1986), pp. 98 f.
44. See Suzy Dufrenne, "Codex Vaticanus Barberinianus Graecus 372," in *Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Liturgie und Andacht im Mittelalter*, ed. L. E. Boyle (Stuttgart: Belser, 1992), pp. 124–27.
45. See Magda Bárányné-Oberschall, *Konstantinos Monomachos császár koronája/The Crown of the Emperor Constantine Monomachos*, *Archaeologia Hungaricae* 22 (Budapest: Magyar Történeti Múzeum, 1937), p. 78. According to the author: "There are so many surprising similarities between the figures of the Monomachos crown and those of the Innsbruck bowl that we are compelled to conclude a direct connection between them."
46. The Monomachos crown provides the earliest example of heart-patterned drapery among Byzantine enamels.
47. See Zoltán Kádár, "Quelques Observations sur la reconstruction de la couronne de l'empereur Constantine Monomaque," *Folia Archaeologica* 16 (1964), pp. 113–24.
48. See Viktor N. Lazarev, *Old Russian Murals and Mosaics: From the 11th to the 16th Century*, trans. Boris Raniger and Nancy Dunn (London: Phaidon Press Ltd., 1966), pp. 56–67, 236–41. The frescoes in the stairwell show the Byzantine emperor, his bodyguard, and court members in the *kathisma* (emperor's box) during the Hippodrome games. Spectators in the Hippodrome watch acrobats, jugglers, musicians, singers, and dancers perform.
49. See André Grabar, "Une Pyxide en ivoire à Dumbarton Oaks. Quelques notes sur l'art profane pendant les derniers siècles de l'empire byzantin," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 14 (1960), pp. 121–46.
50. See Nicolas Oikonomides, "John VII Palaeologus and the Ivory Pyxis at Dumbarton Oaks," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 31 (1977), pp. 329–37.
51. See Liutprand of Cremona, *Antapodosis*, book VI, chapters 5, 8. See Cyril Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire 312–1453: Sources and Documents* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972), pp. 209 f.
52. See George Galavaris, *Hellenike technē. Zographike Byzantinon Cheirotographon* (Athens: Ekdotike Athenon, 1995), pl. 140.
53. See André Grabar, "Une Pyxide en ivoire à Dumbarton Oaks. Quelques notes sur l'art profane pendant les derniers siècles de l'empire byzantin," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 14 (1960), p. 142, figs. 32, 33.
54. See George Galavaris, *Hellenike technē. Zographike Byzantinon Cheirotographon* (Athens: Ekdotike Athenon, 1995), pp. 230 f., figs. 81–86.
55. See George Galavaris, *The Illustrations of the Liturgical Homilies of Gregory Nazianzenus*, *Studies in Manuscript Illumination* 6 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), fig. 418.
56. See *Theophanes Continuatus*, ed. Immanuel Bekker, *Corpus scriptorum historiae byzantinae* (Bonn: 1838), p. 634.
57. See Cyril Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire 312–1453: Sources and Documents* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972), pp. 160 f.
58. See *Theophanes Continuatus*, ed. Immanuel Bekker, *Corpus scriptorum historiae byzantinae* (Bonn: 1838), p. 173.
59. See Priscilla Soucek, "Byzantium and the Islamic East," in *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, eds. Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), p. 404.
60. Ibid.
61. See Cyril Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire 312–1453: Sources and Documents* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972), pp. 209 f.
62. Works displaying this type of ornament include the figures on the crown of Constantine IX Monomachos, in the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Budapest; the figures of Emperor Michael VII Doukas, his son Constantine, and King Géza I of Hungary on the Holy Crown of Hungary, also in the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Budapest; the depictions of Emperor Michael VII Doukas and Empress Maria of Alania, on the Khakhuli Triptych in The Georgian State Art Museum, Tbilisi; and the images of Irene, Doge Ordelafo Falier, David, Solomon, and the mounted emperor hunting, on the Pala d'Oro in the Basilica of San Marco, Venice. For further examples see Thomas Steppan, "Die Artuqidenschale. Emailkunst im Spannungsfeld byzantinischer und islamischer Kultur," in *Die Artuqidenschale im Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum Innsbruck: Mittelalterliche Emailkunst zwischen Orient und Occident*, ed. Thomas Steppan (Munich: Editio Maris, 1995), pp. 27 f.
63. For examples, see the crown of Constantine IX Monomachos and the Holy Crown of Hungary, both in the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Budapest; and the Theotokos Orant, Irene, and Doge Ordelafo Falier, on the Pala d'Oro in the Basilica of San Marco, Venice.

64. For examples, see the shield of Saint Theodoros of Herakleia on an enamel in The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg; the enameled cross on the Khakhuli Triptych in The Georgian State Art Museum, Tbilisi; the frames of the enamels of Irene, of many of the prophets, of the mounted emperor hunting, and of the Ascension of Alexander the Great, as well as the halos of Saints Auxentios, Mardarios, and Eugenios, all, on the Pala d'Oro in the Basilica of San Marco, Venice; and the frame of the icon of the bust of the Archangel Michael in the Treasury of San Marco, Venice.
65. For examples, see the frame of the enamel of the Theotokos Orant on the Pala d'Oro in the Basilica of San Marco, Venice, and the halo of Saint Theodoros of Herakleia on an enamel in The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg.
66. For examples, see the frames of the enamels of the archangels, Solomon, and the mounted emperor hunting, on the Pala d'Oro in the Basilica of San Marco, Venice.
67. See Kurt Weitzmann and George Galavaris, *The Monastery of St. Catherine on Mt. Sinai: The Illuminated Greek Manuscripts*, vol. 1, *From the Ninth to the Twelfth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), pl. 143, ill. 472.
68. See Rachel Ward, *Islamic Metalwork* (London and New York: British Museum, 1993).
69. The cloisonné enamel on the rim of the tenth-century turquoise-colored opaque glass chalice from Iran or Iraq, in the Treasury of San Marco, is also Byzantine in origin. See *Der Schatz von San Marco in Venedig*, ed. Hansgerd Hellenkemper (Cologne and Milan: Olivetti, 1984), pp. 217 ff.
70. Byzantine copper-based cloisonné-enameled works include the Agram reliquary, in the Figdor Collection; a Deesis, in the Kunstgewerbemuseum, Berlin; Saint Theodoros of Herakleia, in The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg; and a standing figure of Christ in the Museo Kircheriano, Rome.
71. See Nikodim P. Kondakoff [Kondakov], *Geschichte und Denkmäler des byzantinischen Emails: Sammlung A. W. Swenigorodskoi*, trans. Ed. Kretschmann (Frankfurt am Main: 1892), p. 52.
72. See Klaus Wessel, *Die byzantinische Emailkunst* (Recklinghausen: Bongers, 1967), p. 127.
73. Paris, Musée du Louvre, Département des Objets d'Art, Inv. no. OA 6276. See *Byzance: L'Art byzantin dans les collections publiques françaises*, ed. Jannic Durand (Paris: Éditions de la Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1992), pp. 330 f; Priscilla Soucek, "Medallion with Gorgon's Head," in *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, eds. Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), no. 114, p. 166.
74. See Margaret E. Frazer, "The Alexander Plate in Innsbruck and its Companion Pieces: East of Byzantium?," *Jewellery Studies* 3 (1989), p. 86, who proposes a Palestinian provenance because of the substantial Crusader influence in the area.
75. London, British Museum, Department of Medieval and Later Antiquities, Inv. no. 1906, 2–3, 1.
76. London, British Museum, Department of Medieval and Later Antiquities, Inv. no. 1911, 5–12, 1.
77. See *Byzantium: Treasures of Byzantine Art and Culture from British Collections*, ed. David Buckton (London: The Trustees of the British Museum, 1994), no. 201 a–b, pp. 186 f.
78. See Klaus Wessel, *Die byzantinische Emailkunst* (Recklinghausen: Bongers, 1967), p. 16.
79. Ibid., p. 9. The various gifts to Christian and Islamic rulers and the donations to church treasuries made by Middle Byzantine emperors included enameled objects with iconographical motifs similar to those on the Artukid bowl. For evidence of this see Priscilla Soucek, "Byzantium and the Islamic East," in *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, eds. Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), pp. 404 f.
80. Examples include the plaques from the crown of Theophanou on the book cover of the *Pericopes* of Henry II, the Crown of Constantine IX Monomachos, the Holy Crown of Hungary, and possibly the Veliki Preslav diadem. The votive crown of Leo VI was not meant to be worn as a sign of power but rather to be placed on the altar.
81. "Michael [VI], King of Rum [Byzantium], sent the lady mother of al-Imam al-Mustansir billah five plates full of jewelry with glass through them: deep red, brilliant white, dark black, pure blue, and turquoise of the best making, and the designs on it were in the best of ways." See Scott Redford, "How Islamic is it? The Innsbruck Plate and its Setting," *Muqarnas* 7 (1990), p. 127.

The Icon of Saint George, with Scenes from His Life, from the Town of Mariupol'

Several factors have contributed to my interest in the Byzantine Relief Icon, with Scenes from the Life of Saint George, in the Natsional'nyi Khudozhnyi muzei Ukrainy (National Art Museum of Ukraine, Kyiv, SK 285), which has been published several times and, therefore, has acquired a considerable bibliography (fig. 1).¹ Firstly, the scholars who wrote about the icon either had not seen it personally, relying on photographs and reproductions, or had studied the icon without reviewing the valuable observations noted during its restoration, without which this unique work of art cannot be understood fully. Secondly, the subjects of the border scenes (figs. 2–11), which are of particular importance to the study of the life and iconography of Saint George, have not been definitively identified. Finally, the relief provides an opportunity to focus on the cult of Saint George in eleventh- through thirteenth-century Crimea and Kyivan Rus'.

For centuries, a legend has been associated with the Icon of Saint George, which, however, fails to touch upon the tragic circumstances of the icon's history or to disclose any of the events that brought the relief to its current ruinous state.²

The icon, which displays the full-length figure of Saint George holding a spear and shield and five reliefs of scenes from his life on both the right and left sides, is preserved in four large fragments and a number of smaller ones.³ Termites have severely weakened the solidity of the icon, which also bears traces of numerous fires. Nevertheless, the hagiographical scenes separated by ornamental bands clearly preserve many of their distinctive features, and have not lost their legibility. The surviving polychromy is also notable.

The absence of evidence indicating the use of slats on the back and sides of the icon confirms that the relief was carved from a single board. (Overall, it measures 106.8 x 74.5 x 6 cm; the central field is 95 x 38 cm, the border scenes are 19 x 17 cm, and the band framing the icon is 3.5 cm wide. The relief is 6 cm deep in the center, and 1 cm in the border scenes.)

Despite its condition, the icon is of undeniable artistic and historical significance. For one hundred and fifty years, its reputation for working miracles and its fame have attracted the attention of researchers. Yet, because there are so few extant Byzantine parallels, it has proven difficult to date or to assign a provenance to the relief.⁴ I shall review briefly the scholarship on the icon, noting the most important questions raised, and the issues debated, in the literature.

The first published information on the Icon of Saint George appeared in the *Statisticheskoi obozrenie goroda Sevastopolia za 1839 god* (*Statistical Survey of the City of Sevastopol' for 1839*). According to this report, in 1779, the icon was transferred from the Monastery of Saint George in Balaklava (near Sevastopol', in the Crimea) to Mariupol' (a town with a large population of Crimean Greeks) on the Sea of Azov.⁵ On account of its reputation for working miracles, the icon



Figure 1. Relief Icon, with Scenes from the Life of Saint George. Byzantine (Khersones) (?), 11th–12th century. Egg tempera over gesso, on carved wood, with traces of gilding: 106.8 x 74.5 x 6 cm. National Museum of Ukraine, Kyiv (SK 285)



Figure 2. Saint George before Diocletian and His Co-Ruler (detail of the Relief Icon, with Scenes from the Life of Saint George)



Figure 3. Saint George Led to Prison (detail of the Relief Icon, with Scenes from the Life of Saint George)

was cited in numerous nineteenth-century Crimean publications concerned with both religious and local matters.⁶

In 1891, in connection with the celebrations of the millennium of Christianity in the Crimea, the icon became the focus of much attention. A legend associated the icon with the founding of the Monastery of Saint George in Balaklava in A.D. 891, and it was considered to be the palladium of the Crimean peninsula. On the occasion of the millennium, the icon toured the Orthodox churches in the cities of the Crimea beginning with Balaklava, where it remained for more than a month; from there, it traveled to Bakhchysarai and then to Simferopol'.⁷ In Sevastopol', the icon's silver cover was removed for the first time, revealing its polychromy as well as its extremely poor state of preservation.⁸

In 1895, a well-known Crimean archaeologist, A. L. Bert'e-Delagard, asked the

Russian art historian Nikolai Pokrovskii for his opinion regarding the icon, based on photographs made available to him.⁹ Pokrovskii very scrupulously studied the photographs and was the first to date the icon, assigning it to the eleventh or early twelfth century. As an authority on Christian iconography, Pokrovskii was interested especially in the hagiographical border scenes, which he was able to identify, noting, as well, the archaic features of the iconography of the central figure of Saint George.¹⁰

Earlier, the relief had aroused the interest of Hryhorii I. Timoshevs'kyi, a local secondary-school teacher in Mariupol', who published an essay on the history of the icon, made a pencil drawing of it, and asserted that it had been transferred from Balaklava to Mariupol' in order to be displayed in the Monastery of Saint George, which was to be built there.¹¹ When the icon arrived in Mariupol', it was placed under the care of the

metropolitan Ihnatii; after his death, it was placed in a special case and set above his grave in the old Church of Saint Kharlampii. In 1848, the icon was moved to the newly built Cathedral of Saint Kharlampii. Timoshevs'kyi's description dates from 1859: "The icon of the great holy martyr and victory-bearer George is carved from a board that is coated with mastic on which the saint's face is depicted . . . it is set in a carved and gilded frame and is encased in a silver-gilt cover. Along its borders are the torments of the saint, which are also covered with silver mounts. A silver-gilt wreath crowns the saint's head."¹² The description further states that the icon was decorated with precious stones, and that it was in a poor state of preservation.¹³

In 1910, Bert'e-Delagard personally examined the icon, and published a critical review of the existing literature on the subject. He believed that the icon was transferred to Mariupol' in 1777, and he went on to repudiate the icon's miracle-working powers, boldly disputing the date of the millennium of Christianity in the Crimea.¹⁴ The review also contains valuable information regarding the monastery and the icon that contradicts the author's own inferences. For example, Bert'e-Delagard states that Ihnatii brought the icon directly from Constantinople to Balaklava on April 23, 1771, upon his appointment as metropolitan, and that it was his private property.¹⁵ Bert'e-Delagard's skepticism led him to assert that the monastery in Balaklava was not founded until the fourteenth or fifteenth century.¹⁶ However, the exceptional popularity of Saint George and his cult in the Crimea must be attributed to a long-standing tradition and an association with a relic. In Khersones, the earliest image of Saint George dates to the sixth century.¹⁷ The Balaklava monastery was certainly the oldest dedicated to Saint George in the Crimea and must have been responsible for the dissemination of the saint's cult. Accounts written by travelers confirm this. In 1799, Pavel Sumarokov wrote that the feast of Saint George was celebrated with special solemnity

in the Balaklava monastery and that images of the saint were to be found throughout the Crimea, indicating "that this saint was exceptionally revered by the local people."¹⁸ According to Martin Bronevskii (who visited Balaklava in 1578), on April 23, "crowds of Greeks thronged there [to the Monastery of Saint George in Balaklava] from all of [the] Crimea."¹⁹ In 1843, the Frenchman Frédéric Dubois de Montpéroux made a similar observation.²⁰

Bert'e-Delagard also attempted to identify the icon's border scenes, surmising that the first scene portrayed Saint George confessing his faith before the emperor and empress (see fig. 2), the third scene showed the stoning of the saint (see fig. 4), and the sixth scene depicted the lashing of the saint with ox sinews (see fig. 7).²¹ Bert'e-Delagard's interpretations did not always agree with those of Pokrovskii, who concluded that the first scene showed Saint George and a guard standing before Diocletian and his co-ruler; the third scene represented the saint with shackled feet, being stoned by executioners in his prison cell; and the sixth scene portrayed him being beaten with ox sinews or iron hooks.²²

Bert'e-Delagard believed the icon to be of very low artistic quality: "It is very crude, almost repellant, especially if we remember that it is made of such an easily wrought medium as wood. . . ."²³ He dated the icon somewhere between the twelfth and the thirteenth century.²⁴

In 1930, after a long hiatus in the investigation of the icon, Josef Myslivec included it in his fundamental study on the iconography of Saint George. While admitting that the photograph of the icon available to him unfortunately precluded any serious analysis, he concluded, on the basis of his examination of the typology of images and their relationship to hagiographical texts, that the relief clearly was a rare variant of other known hagiographical icons of Saint George. He also questioned Pokrovskii's early dating of the icon to between the eleventh and twelfth

century. According to Myslivec, the unusual arrangement of border scenes on only the left and right sides of the icon and the use of ornamental bands to separate them were characteristics of Italo-Byzantine icons. The limited number of scenes represented, considering the empty space left at the bottom on each side of the icon (see fig. 1), perplexed Myslivec, but indicated to him that the central figure and the border scenes were created simultaneously.²⁵

In identifying the hagiographical scenes, researchers usually disagree on the first image (see fig. 2). Myslivec called this scene Saint George before Diocletian.²⁶ When considering the scene depicting Saint George Destroying the Idols (see fig. 10), Myslivec keenly observed that the posture of the idol on the column is the same as that of the central figure of the saint. He also pointed out that the eleventh-century cycle of scenes from the Life of Saint George in the Cathedral of Sviata Sofiia in Kyiv was the earliest extant example of this subject.²⁷

Myslivec included the Icon of Saint George in his 1930 study, but since 1917, its whereabouts had become unknown. In 1965, Hryhorii N. Lohvyn and I attempted to locate the icon in the Mariupol'skyi kraieznavchyi muzei (Mariupol' Museum of Regional Studies); although there was no record of it in the Mariupol' museum's inventories, by sheer luck we came across it in a small storeroom.

After our discovery, L. H. Chlenova, of the National Art Museum of Ukraine in Kyiv, and I. P. Dorofiienko, a restorer, supervised the transfer of the icon to the Kyiv museum. At the time, the icon already was missing its silver cover, making its poor condition immediately apparent. Nikolai V. Pertsev, a prominent restorer from Saint Petersburg, who had previously worked for the National Art Museum of Ukraine, agreed to undertake the restoration of the relief, under the supervision of the Council of Restoration Laboratories of the State Russian Museum in Saint Petersburg, where he was employed.²⁸

After the restoration of the icon and its return to Kyiv, the Byzantinist Vasilii Putsko hastily published an article on the icon, without, however, taking the restoration report into account. He provides a detailed account of the existing literature on the icon, and describes the icon at length, discusses its iconography, and compares its hagiographical scenes with those on the chased silver cross from Mestia (the village of Sveti in Svanetia), concluding that the models for the central figure of the Mariupol' icon and for its hagiographical scenes are different in date.²⁹ He draws parallels between border scenes on the icon and Romanesque sculpture, and states that: "The mentioned similarities, which suggest connections between the relief scenes from the Life of Saint George and Romanesque bone carvings, possibly can be explained by certain stylistic peculiarities in the relief scenes on the Mariupol' icon, which, in part, find parallels in medieval Italian sculpture."³⁰

Since Putsko's article is the latest monographic publication on the icon, I shall dwell on some of the conclusions put forth in it.³¹ When referring to the border scenes, Putsko gives them slightly revised titles. For example, he identifies the first scene as Saint George Confessing His Faith before Diocletian and the Consul Magnentius,³² which, in my opinion, is quite arbitrary. Pokrovskii was correct when he identified the subject as Saint George before Diocletian and His Co-Ruler (see fig. 2).³³ A careful examination of the scene reveals that it is clearly and legibly composed. On the left, two identically dressed emperors—wearing tunics whose sleeves are decorated with *clavi* (vertical stripes); small caps; and boots—are seated on thrones with their feet resting on high footboards. One of the emperors is somewhat older than the other. The emperors are guarded by a soldier, who stands behind one of the thrones. On the right side of the composition, another soldier escorts Saint George. In my opinion, the scene depicts Saint George before Diocletian and Maximian. This composition is unparal-



Figure 4. The Stoning of Saint George (detail of the Relief Icon, with Scenes from the Life of Saint George)



Figure 5. The Torture of Saint George on the Wheel (detail of the Relief Icon, with Scenes from the Life of Saint George)

leled in hagiographical icons of Saint George, and suggests that the relief dates to a period when the hagiographical cycle of scenes from the saint's life was still being formulated. This border scene corresponds directly to a historical event. From A.D. 285, the emperor Diocletian (r. A.D. 284–305), together with Maximian, who first held the title of Caesar (A.D. 285) and later that of Augustus (A.D. 286–305), jointly ruled the Roman Empire. Beginning in A.D. 303, both rulers initiated the ruthless persecution of Christians. According to a Cappadocian legend introduced into one of the editions of the apocrypha on Saint George, the two rulers met to confer on the subject of the punishment of Christians.³⁴ In other visual representations of the hagiographical cycle of the Life of Saint George, some dating from as early as the first half of the eleventh century—as, for example, the fresco cycle in the Sviata Sofiia Cathedral in Kyiv—the saint stands before

the sole figure of Diocletian; such images are abbreviated versions of the historical event.

Details of iconography and of composition are important in establishing the date of the icon because its poor physical state limits—although it does not completely exclude—a stylistic analysis. The iconography of the central figure of Saint George finds many analogies among eleventh-century works as well as some earlier examples.³⁵

Putsko describes the icon's color in detail, and defines the medium as gouache. He associates the polychromy of this relief with that of the thirteenth-century hagiographical Icon of Saint George from Kastoria in Greece, which displays painted, rather than carved, border scenes.³⁶ A visual analysis of the present work presupposes a thorough knowledge of its physical condition, however, this can be obtained only from the report made by the restoration laboratories of the State Russian Museum in Saint Petersburg.³⁷



Figure 6. The Torment of Saint George in the Lime Pit (detail of the Relief Icon, with Scenes from the Life of Saint George)



Figure 7. The Torture of Saint George with Iron Hooks (detail of the Relief Icon, with Scenes from the Life of Saint George)

Time and termites have pockmarked the surface of the bas relief, producing a spongy texture in some areas. Later coats of paint hide some of the holes created over the centuries. However, only the definitive restoration of the icon has prevented further destruction.

Furthermore, fire damaged the relief, resulting in lacunae and causing charring, the accumulation of soot, and darkening of the surface. Although candles may be somewhat responsible, it is also possible that there was a fire in the building that housed the icon. Since some of the damaged areas are coated with wax, mastic, and gilding (especially the armor of the central figure of Saint George), these must date to the distant past. In several cases, the restored, painted, and gilded sections were exposed to fire again, and once more were restored. There are approximately twenty such places: The spear of Saint George is one example. Considerable parts of the

face, garments, and body of Saint George, as well as many of the border scenes, suffered from fire. The wood was affected more than the paint layer, and in some places the paint is applied over charred wood. In those sections most heavily exposed to fire, the pure white gesso ground developed a yellowish tinge.

In addition to damage caused by termites and fire, specific details, especially on the central figure of Saint George, were lost as a consequence of unknown circumstances. These losses were crudely puttied with a brownish-colored wax or wax mastic. Removal of the wax mastic resulted in losses to the background and the figure of Saint George (such as his shoulder, the hand holding the spear, and his feet). Thus, the surface of the relief, with the exception of areas of exposed or charred wood, displays layers of overpainting, gilding, and other "cosmetic" work completed at different times.

The wax or wax-mastic layer, which resembles a hard film and covers almost the entire surface of the icon, is of a later date. It fills all the hollows of the relief, and absorbs dust, dirt, and soot. The number of paint layers varies from place to place. While in some areas as many as four coats can be discerned, usually two layers cover the entire icon, the earlier of which was applied to the primary coat of white gesso.

In numerous areas the gesso was painted. The substantial presence of yellow on the gesso ground indicates that either this is the first coat of paint, or that some event, such as the fire mentioned above, caused a change in the color of the gesso ground from white to yellow. The earliest layer has a restricted color range. The entire background and some details are periwinkle blue, while other details are greenish gray, brownish ocher, yellow, and red.

The paint medium is somewhat unusual, not oil or tempera. It is hygroscopic, so that, when moistened, the tones of the colors deepen. Furthermore, the color exhibits no luster; its mat texture probably is due to gum or animal glue. The later coats of paint, possibly tempera, are brighter, and include red, flesh pink, blue, green, and black. Traces of gold in the border scenes are the remains of inscriptions, and are from a later period; the other remnants of gilding vary in date.

The removal of overpainting exposed numerous additional losses, including charred sections, holes made by termites, and craquelure. Some of these losses had been concealed with canvas—as, for example, in the area to the left of the thigh of the central figure or on the tip of the spear. Analysis and restoration of the icon did not reveal the character of its primary surface, and, therefore, it is difficult to draw any conclusions regarding the original use of gilding and polychromy. In some areas, under the earliest layers of ground and paint, the board looks weathered, exhibiting exposure to high temperatures and fire and changes in color. While it is possible that at a certain time the surface of the relief was not covered with paint, such signs of age

and damage below the paint layer could be the result of fire, cleaning, and other factors. Another possibility is that originally the relief was only partially painted and gilded. Thus, any further assumptions regarding the primary appearance of the icon would require additional laboratory research. At the time of the restoration of the icon, such research was not undertaken, due to the lack of the necessary equipment.

It is also impossible to establish how the two uncarved areas on either side of the icon, below the border scenes, initially looked. After cleaning, fragmentary remains of a painted gesso ground were exposed. There were no traces of inscriptions.

In conclusion, the numerous coats of paint applied at various times altered the icon, camouflaging its original character.

An image of the Calvary cross with the Instruments of the Passion and an ornamental design set against a white background decorate the reverse of the icon. The painting has suffered losses and is missing entirely on the right side. Glue-based paint was applied over a thin layer of gesso-primed canvas. The board below the canvas displays serious damage in several areas, indicating that this painting on the reverse of the icon must be later in date; perhaps it is part of an eighteenth-century restoration campaign.

Scientific and methodological discussions held at the State Russian Museum in Saint Petersburg, which I attended as the representative of the National Art Museum of Ukraine in Kyiv, led to an agreement to “carry out the necessary restoration work, choosing such methods that exclude the possibility of outright irreversible consequences and losses, so as to ensure the preservation of the monument and allow for its exhibition; limit to a minimum the strengthening of the wood by impregnation with cleansing solutions; and respect the lack of knowledge regarding the original appearance of the icon and restrain from tinting or reconstructing lost parts of the relief.”³⁸

The condition of the wood was the most important factor in determining the restoration procedure. While the ongoing preservation of the icon in a museum environment will require constant monitoring, the icon now appears to be safe and stable. Therefore, a decision was made not to strengthen the wood with synthetic resins because their effects have not yet been tested by time. The final restoration work included the following measures:

- 1) The bas relief was dismantled, and all surface dirt and later, coarse layers of wax mastic were removed.
- 2) In the areas of peeling on the obverse (on the flat rectangular surfaces below the border scenes) and on the reverse of the icon, the paint layer and ground were fixed, using isinglass.
- 3) Those parts of the relief that preserve the earliest paint layer and the primary gilding applied to the gesso ground were cleaned. While experimental cleaning employing various technical means and solvents was tested, mechanical cleaning with the help of a scalpel and other sharp-edged instruments, as well as a stereoscopic binocular loupe, proved the safest, most expedient, and most effective method. The use of solvents in this case was inappropriate, as they affected the color of the underlying paint layers, and were absorbed into the pockmarks, raising the possibility of further deterioration.
- 4) The individual parts of the relief were collected and reassembled, and isinglass and a polyvinyl emulsion were applied. Screws were inserted in existing nail holes to mechanically fasten the segments of the relief to the case in which the icon had been found.
- 5) In areas of paint loss, minimal and restrained tinting of the exposed gesso, using neutral watercolors, was undertaken, in order to avoid "uneasy variegation."

Hryhorii N. Lohvyn and I spent several years studying this relief. We sought the advice of Kurt Weitzmann, André Grabar, and Viktor

Lazarev, who alerted us to the artistic peculiarities of the icon. Although it is impossible to reconstruct the original appearance of the icon, certain observations concerning its style can be made.

Despite significant damage, it is clear that the central figure of Saint George is the most skillfully executed part of the icon (see fig. 1). The figure displays classical proportions (a height of 7.5 heads), even though the luxuriance of Saint George's characteristic curls makes his head appear slightly oversized. The halo would have emphasized the face of the saint even further.

Saint George's contrapposto stance, with the weight of his body resting on the left leg, generates an impression of ease, and imparts a refined quality to the figure (this becomes clear from comparisons with Georgian chased icons or with known wood reliefs of the same subject). Rendering the figure in a contrapposto pose helped the sculptor to create a three-dimensional representation and simultaneously to convey the body's volume and physical weight. Only a highly skilled carver could have accomplished such a task. The confidence and ability of the artist are evident in the proportions of the arms and legs, the definition of the muscles, the gentle curve of the waist, and the slight inclination of the shield. The vertical rhythm of the lines of the cloak, spear, sword, and armor enhances the solemnity of the image and bestows a triumphant quality upon the warrior.

The face of Saint George has suffered the greatest damage. The extant segments do not allow for a complete reconstruction. Nevertheless, the conventions of Byzantine stylization in the representation of figures, which convey an appearance of timeless existence and eternal life, endow the young saint with a certain remoteness. To some extent this is achieved through the two-dimensional treatment of the eyes.

Previous researchers have noted that the number of scenes represented on the relief is fewer than on most hagiographical icons. In



Figure 8. The Resurrection of the Centurion Leon's Son (detail of the Relief Icon, with Scenes from the Life of Saint George)



Figure 9. Saint George Curing Glykerios's Ox (detail of the Relief Icon, with Scenes from the Life of Saint George)

the limited number of episodes selected several major aspects of the saint's life are developed (see figs. 2–11). The scenes illustrate the saint's dramatic path to martyrdom and accentuate his heroism. Saint George does not wear military armor; instead, his spiritual feats are emphasized. The saint endures torments, demonstrating his steadfast faith and readiness to sacrifice his life. His deeds establish his "credentials" to work miracles.

All the scenes exhibit a number of compositional elements in common. They do not include architectural settings or conventional landscape elements, such as rocks or hills. Also, the figures, usually symmetrically arranged, fill almost the entire space in each scene.³⁹

Except for the scene of the Torment in the Lime Pit, it is difficult to find precise compositional analogies for the individual episodes in the cycle of the saint's life.⁴⁰ It

appears that, at the time that the icon was painted, a canon for the hagiographical cycle had not yet been established, so that the artist was free to improvise. This is especially apparent from a comparison of the border scenes with the central figure, which adheres to established prototypes. Every hagiographical scene on the icon displays original elements (as, for example, Saint George before Diocletian and Maximian [see fig. 2], the Stoning of Saint George [see fig. 4], the Torture on the Wheel [see fig. 5], and the Torture with Iron Hooks [see fig. 7]). As in all early hagiographical icons, the border compositions are strikingly clear and realistic. They are meant to attract the viewer's attention instantly and to invite him or her to scrutinize each scene individually. The artist resorts to various devices to impart expressiveness to the represented event and to reveal its inner tension. Despite the restrained

gestures of the figures, the scenes exhibit a strong internal dynamic that is achieved through the expressive turns of heads and bodies, as well as the movement of the hands (as in the scene of Saint George Led to Prison [see fig. 3]). The symmetrically disposed figures interact with each other through these gestures. Some scenes, such as that of the Torture with Iron Hooks (see fig. 7), represent a segment of time rather than a single moment. Within the scenes, the artist employs numerous methods to render three-dimensional space and to create the illusion of depth: For example, in the scene of Saint George before Diocletian and Maximian (see fig. 2), the throne on which the emperors sit is set at an angle; the composition of The Torture on the Wheel (see fig. 5) is rendered on several planes; and the coffin is modeled in the round in the scene of The Resurrection of the Centurion Leon's Son (see fig. 8). Other notable features of the border scenes include the executioner's posture, in the scene of The Beheading of Saint George (see fig. 11), which, as André Grabar once pointed out, echoes that of the central figure of the saint himself;⁴¹ and the use of orthogonal and axonometric projections and reverse perspective in the representation of architecture.

We can say with certainty that the central figure of Saint George and the border scenes were conceived as integral parts of one complete composition. Even the detail of repeating the silhouette of the central figure of the saint in the border scene depicting him destroying the idols (see fig. 10) testifies to the simultaneous creation of all the constituent elements of the icon. It is difficult to imagine that a second independent master would have duplicated the stance of the saint in the representation of an idol.

The state of preservation of the icon prevents us from assessing the number of masters involved in its production, but we can state confidently that it was meant to represent Saint George standing triumphantly within a ceremonial portal (see fig. 1). Such

an interpretation of the subject explains the number of border scenes, their ornamentation, and their distribution on only the right and left sides of the icon.

Dating the Crimean relief is a rather complicated task, primarily because its poor state of preservation virtually excludes judgments based on stylistic characteristics. Individual features of the icon and the inductive "anatomical" analysis of details point to a wide range of analogous works of varying origin and date.

I deliberately have avoided discussing the genesis of the iconography of the central figure of Saint George, as this topic already has been widely addressed in the literature, where it is acknowledged that the figure of the saint on the Kyiv icon represents a type that was extremely popular in Byzantine art.⁴²

The attire of the figures on the icon, especially the military accoutrements, is typically Roman, and often encountered in eleventh- and twelfth-century art. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, plate armor changed somewhat in form.⁴³ The shield of Saint George in the central image is decorated with the head of a figure within a star—a solar symbol also seen on works from Khersones.⁴⁴ Putsko considers the almond-shaped "Norman" shield of one of the warriors in the scene of Saint George before Diocletian and Maximian (see fig. 2) as sufficient evidence for dating the icon between the twelfth and the thirteenth century.⁴⁵ Numerous examples of representations of such shields in earlier works, however, refute this argument.⁴⁶ I am inclined to place the icon somewhere between the eleventh and the twelfth century—as already proposed by Pokrovskii.⁴⁷ The original compositions and iconography of the border scenes—especially that of Saint George before Diocletian and Maximian—favor this earlier dating, but it is assigned with some reservations even though existing eleventh-century analogies for the restricted number of hagiographical scenes and the details of the icon to some extent support this date.⁴⁸



Figure 10. Saint George Destroying the Idols (detail of the Relief Icon, with Scenes from the Life of Saint George)



Figure 11. The Beheading of Saint George (detail of the Relief Icon, with Scenes from the Life of Saint George)

No less problematic is the icon's provenance. I disagree entirely with Bert'e-Delagard, who did not believe the icon to be a Crimean work, but maintained that it belonged to Metropolitan Ihnatii and did not arrive in Khersones until 1771.⁴⁹ It is improbable, however, that after a period of only six years in the Crimea the icon developed the legendary reputation that accompanied it to Mariupol'.

In my opinion, a highly skilled artist created the icon to meet the needs of an existing cult of Saint George on the Crimean peninsula. The founding of monasteries and their dedication to a certain saint or Church feast always have been associated with a relic. From the tenth through the twelfth century, the Crimea had five eparchies: Cherson (Khersones), Bosporos, Gothia (Dory), Sougdaia (Surož or Sudak), and Fullska.⁵⁰ Generally, icon-painting workshops, which employed both visiting

masters (even from Constantinople) and local artists, were associated with eparchies. The eparchy of Khersones, to which the Monastery of Saint George in Balaklava belonged, was the most important in the Crimea. Among the main functions of the miracle-working Icon of Saint George was the promotion of the cult of the saint in the Crimea. The existence of numerous small stone icons from Khersones, made for various strata of the population, supports the attribution of such a role to the relief, which, to some degree, appears to have influenced their iconography.⁵¹

In the tenth century, the economic status of Khersones improved considerably as a result of trade with the Pechenegs and the Kyivan Rus'. Khersones maintained contact with Constantinople and Asia Minor, and was considered to be "a missionary among barbarians."⁵² The city suffered a decline in the early eleventh century but began to recover

during the 1070s. At that time, Venetian merchants started to develop economic interests in the Crimea, and by the twelfth century these interests were rivaled by those of the Genoese.⁵³ The arrival of Western Europeans in the Crimea explains the appearance of Romanesque elements in Crimean works of art, such as the Norman shield and the mail on the figure of Saint George.

The fact that Iaroslav—son of the Kyivan grand prince Volodymyr (d. 1015) and himself the grand prince of Kyiv from 1019 to 1054—was baptized George, and that he dedicated one of the chapels of the Sviata Sofiia Cathedral in Kyiv to Saint George, testify to the wide dissemination of the saint's cult in tenth- and eleventh-century Rus'. The chapel of Saint George occupies part of the north aisle of the Sviata Sofiia Cathedral, and the frescoes decorating the chapel's vault and apse constitute the earliest representations of scenes from the life of that saint. In addition, in 1037, Prince Iaroslav founded a church and monastery dedicated to Saint George in Kyiv. The date of the consecration of the church, November 27, became a local Church feast day.⁵⁴ It also should be noted that the image of Saint George frequently appeared on eleventh-century seals and coins.

The legend of Saint George in Kherstones was impressed upon the consciousness of Ukrainians and Russians. Close links between Kherstones and Kyiv permit us to advance the hypothesis that the cult of Saint George spread to Kyiv from Kherstones. Between 989 and 996, during the reign of Grand Prince Volodymyr, the first stone church, the Desiatynna (Tithe) Church, was built in Kyiv. The *Pověst vremennykh lēt* (*Tale of the Bygone Years*) informs us that Volodymyr "commissioned Nastas of Kherstones and priests of Kherstones to serve in it, and for it he took from Kherstones icons, and church vessels, and crosses."⁵⁵

These facts provide evidence that the cult of Saint George in the Crimea dates back many centuries, and, even as late as

the eighteenth century (before the eviction of the Greeks), there were twenty-eight churches and three monasteries dedicated to the saint.⁵⁶ Regardless of its provenance, the hagiographical Icon, with Scenes from the Life of Saint George, is intimately associated with the medieval history of the Crimea and, as André Grabar stated, the artist who created this work should be considered a representative of a prominent local artistic center.⁵⁷

1. The icon was illustrated in Grigorii I. Timoshevskii [Hryhorii I. Timoshevs'kyi], *Mariupol i ego okrestnosti. Otchet ob uchebnykh ekskursiakh Mariupol'skoi Aleksandrovskoi gimnazii* (Mariupol': D.A. Kharadzhaiev, 1892), p. 125; see also Aleksandr L. Bert'e-Delagard, "K istorii khristianstva v Krymu. Mnimoie tysiacheletie. Vymysel i deistvitel'nost' v istorii Georgievskogo Balaklavskogo monastyria," *Zapiski Imperatorskogo odeskogo obshchestva istorii i drevnostei* 28 (1910), p. 108; Hryhorii N. Lohvyn and Liudmyla S. Miliaieva [Milyaeva], "Unikal'na pam'iatka," *Obrazotvorche mystetstvo* 1 (1970), p. 6; Grigorii N. Logvin [Hryhorii N. Lohvyn] and Liudmyla S. Miliaieva [Milyaeva], "Novoe v drevnem ukrainskom iskusstve," *Nauka i chelovechestvo* (1970), p. 32; Vasilii Putsko, "Mariupol'skyi rel'ef sv. Georgiia," *Zbornik radova Vizantolozhskog Instituta* 13 (1971), p. 336; Hryhorii N. Lohvyn, Liudmyla S. Miliaieva [Milyaeva], and Vira I. Svensitska, *Ukrainskyi seredn'ovichnyi zhyvopys* (Kyiv: Mystetstvo, 1976), pl. 9; Mykhail D. Faktorovich and Larysa G. Chlenova, *Khudozhestvennyie muzei Kiev* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1977), p. 21; Alisa Bank, *Byzantine Art in the Collections of Soviet Museums* (Leningrad [Saint Petersburg]: Aurora, 1985), plates 322–323; Grigorii N. Logvin [Hryhorii N. Lohvyn] and Liudmyla S. Miliaieva [Milyaeva], "Novoe o drevnem ukrainskom iskusstve," *K istokam kul'tury narodov SSSR, Skvoz' veka* (Moscow: Znanie, 1987), p. 86; Liudmyla S. Miliaieva [Milyaeva], "Restavratsiia vizantiiskoi ikony 'Sv. Heorhiia z zhytiem'," *Rodovid* 8 (1994), pp. 91, 96; Olenka Z. Pevny, "Relief Icon with Saint George and Scenes from His Life," in *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, eds. Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), no. 202. Many engravings of the icon were printed in Moscow in the nineteenth century.
2. The archimandrite Nikon first related the legend about the Icon of Saint George. The romantic story can be summarized as follows: Crimean Greek merchants were caught in a storm on the Black Sea near the rocky bay of Balaklava. In utter despair they

- prayed to Saint George. The storm subsided and the icon of Saint George appeared on a rock in the bay. In thanksgiving for their miraculous rescue, the merchants founded the Monastery of Saint George on the rocky cliffs of Balaklava bay, located about twenty kilometers from Korsun' (modern Khersones; ancient Chersonese). The cave church was consecrated in 891, and the miraculous icon was placed in it. See Archimandrite Nikon, *Balaklavskii Georgievskii pervoklasnii monastyr'* (Chernihiv: 1862), p. 33.
- The legend was repeated by the many authors who wrote about the monastery. Vladimir Bronewski, who visited it in 1815, was shown a tree, not a rock, on which the icon was displayed. See Aleksandr L. Bert'e-Delagard, "K istorii khristianstva v Krymu. Mnimoie tysiacheletie. Vymysel i deistvitel'nost' v istorii Georgievskogo Balaklavskogo monastyria," *Zapiski Imperatorskogo odesskogo obshchestva istorii i drevnostei* 28 (1910), p. 91. This author does not believe that the monastery was founded in 891. See his discussion on pp. 1–108.
3. See figures 2–11 for the scenes from the Life of Saint George represented on the icon; beginning on the left, from top to bottom, they include: Saint George before Diocletian and Maximian; Saint George Led to Prison; The Stoning of Saint George; The Torture on the Wheel; The Torment in the Lime Pit; The Torture with Iron Hooks; The Resurrection of the Centurion Leon's Son; Saint George Curing Glykerios's Ox; Saint George Destroying the Idols; and The Beheading of Saint George.
 4. Extant Byzantine wood relief icons include: the thirteenth-century Icon of Saint George, in the Byzantine Museum in Athens (see Reinhold Lange, *Die byzantinische Reliefikone* [Recklinghausen: Aurel Bongers, 1964], pp. 121–22); the thirteenth-century Icon of Saint George, in the Church of Saint George in Gallista, near Kastoria, Greece (*ibid.*, ill. 50); and the early-fourteenth-century Icon of Saint Kliment, in the Church of Sv. Kliment in Ohrid, Macedonia (*ibid.*, p. 124, ill. 51).
 5. See "Prilozhenie," *Zhurnal Ministerstva vnutrennikh del* 8 (Saint Petersburg: 1840), p. 270.
 6. See Archimandrite Nikon, *Balaklavskii Georgievskii pervoklasnii monastyr'* (Chernihiv: 1862), p. 78; Fedor V. Livanov, *Georgievskii monastyr' v Krymu* (Moscow: 1872), p. 14; Mikhail Rodionov, *Statistiko-khronologicheskoe opisanie Tavricheskoi eparkhii* (Simferopol': 1872), pp. 12–13.
- In 1873, Viktor I. Grigorovich saw the Icon of Saint George in Mariupol', and wrote, "The icon is a splendid creation of Byzantine art"; see Viktor I. Grigorovich, *Zapiski antikvara o poezdke na Kalku i Kalmius, i na iuzhnyi poberezhia Dniepra i Dniestra* (Odesa: 1874), p. 9.
- Piotr G. Lebedintsev mentions the transfer of the icon from the Monastery of Saint George in Balaklava to Mariupol'; see Piotr G. Lebedintsev, "Stoletie tserkovnoi zhizni Kryma," *Zapiski Imperatorskogo odesskogo obshchestva istorii i drevnostei* 13 (Odesa: 1883), p. 205.
7. See Vasilii Putsko, "Mariupol'skyi rel'ef sv. Georgiia," *Zbornik radova Vizantoloshkog Instituta* 13 (1971), p. 313.
 8. See Aleksandr L. Bert'e-Delagard, "K istorii khristianstva v Krymu. Mnimoie tysiacheletie. Vymysel i deistvitel'nost' v istorii Georgievskogo Balaklavskogo monastyria," *Zapiski Imperatorskogo odesskogo obshchestva istorii i drevnostei* 28 (1910), p. 18.
 9. Nikolai V. Pokrovskii obtained photographs from the Moscow Archaeological Society.
 10. See Nikolai V. Pokrovskii, "Khronika," *Arkheologicheskie izvestia i zametki* 6 (1895), pp. 224–26.
 11. See Grigorii I. Timoshevskii [Hryhorii I. Timoshevs'kyi], *Mariupol' i ego okrestnosti. Otchot ob uchebnykh ekskursiakh mariupol'skoi Aleksandrovskei gimnazii* (Mariupol': D. A. Kharadzhaiev, 1892), pp. 124–26.
 12. *Ibid.*, p. 124.
 13. *Ibid.*, p. 125.
 14. See Aleksandr L. Bert'e-Delagard, "K istorii khristianstva v Krymu. Mnimoie tysiacheletie. Vymysel i deistvitel'nost' v istorii Georgievskogo Balaklavskogo monastyria," *Zapiski Imperatorskogo odesskogo obshchestva istorii i drevnostei* 28 (1910), pp. 1–108.
 15. *Ibid.*, pp. 15–16.
 16. According to Bert'e-Delagard, the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries witnessed a "renewed tendency toward eremitic and solitary life"; *ibid.*, p. 55.
 17. See Alisa Bank, *Byzantine Art in the Collections of Soviet Museums* (Leningrad [Saint Petersburg]: Aurora, 1985), p. 283, plates 75–77.
 18. See Pavel I. Sumarokov, *Puteshestvie po vsiemu Krymu i Bessarabii v 1799 godu* (Moscow: 1880), p. 43.
 19. See Aleksandr L. Bert'e-Delagard, "K istorii khristianstva v Krymu. Mnimoie tysiacheletie. Vymysel i deistvitel'nost' v istorii Georgievskogo Balaklavskogo monastyria," *Zapiski Imperatorskogo odesskogo obshchestva istorii i drevnostei* 28 (1910), p. 56.
 20. *Ibid.*, p. 97.
 21. *Ibid.*, p. 18.
 22. See Nikolai V. Pokrovskii, "Khronika," *Arkheologicheskie izvestia i zametki* 6 (1895), p. 225.
 23. See Aleksandr L. Bert'e-Delagard, "K istorii khristianstva v Krymu. Mnimoie tysiacheletie. Vymysel i deistvitel'nost' v istorii Georgievskogo Balaklavskogo monastyria," *Zapiski Imperatorskogo odesskogo obshchestva istorii i drevnostei* 28 (1910), p. 68.
 24. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
 25. See Josef Myslivec, "Svatý Jiří ve východokřesťanském umění," *Byzantinoslavica* 5 (1933–34), pp. 304–75.
 26. *Ibid.*, p. 351.
 27. *Ibid.*, p. 326.
 28. The icon underwent conservation between 1950 and 1970 in Saint Petersburg by Nikolai V. Pertsev, Innokentii P. Iaroslavsev, Irma V. Iarigina, and Aleksandr A. Rybakov.

29. See Vasilii Putsko, "Mariupol'skyi rel'ef sv. Georgiia," *Zbornik radova Vizantološkog Instituta* 13 (1971), pp. 313–31.
30. Ibid., p. 326.
31. For recent publications on the icon see note 1.
32. See Vasilii Putsko, "Mariupol'skyi rel'ef sv. Georgiia," *Zbornik radova Vizantološkog Instituta* 13 (1971), p. 317.
33. See Nikolai V. Pokrovskii, "Khronika," *Arkheologicheskie izvestia i zametki* 6 (1895), p. 225.
34. This legend is referred to by Aleksandr Veselovskii, *Rozyskamiia v oblasti russkikh dukhovnykh stikhov*, vol. 2, *Sv. Georgii v legende, pesne i obriade*. Prilozheniie k 37 tomu Zapisok Imperatorskoi Akademii Nauk, no. 31 (Saint Petersburg: 1880), pp. 37–38.
35. The iconography is discussed in Josef Myslivec, "Svatý Jiří ve východokřesťanském umění," *Byzantinoslavica* 5 (1933–34), pp. 314–18; Viktor N. Lazarev, "Novyi pamiatnik stankovoi zhiropisi XII veka i obraz Georgiia-voina v vizantiiskom i drevnerusskom iskusstve," in *Russkaia srednevekovaiia zhivopis'* (Moscow: Nauka, 1970), p. 56.
36. See note 32, above.
37. See Archives of the National Art Museum of Ukraine, Kyiv, "Protokol restavratsii 1970 r," compiled by Nikolai V. Pertsev, and his assistants Innokentii P. Iaroslavtsev, Irma V. Iarigina, and Aleksandr A. Rybakov. The description of the state of preservation of the icon is also based on a letter the author received from Nikolai V. Pertsev on March 3, 1971.
38. See Nikolai V. Pertsev, *Katalog restavratsionnikh robot* (Saint Petersburg: Khudozhnik Rosii, 1992), pp. 54–56.
39. These compositional features were noted by Vasilii Putsko, "Mariupol'skyi rel'ef sv. Georgiia," *Zbornik radova Vizantološkog Instituta* 13 (1971), p. 325.
40. Analogies for this scene can be found in the eleventh-century frescoes of the Sviata Sofia Cathedral in Kyiv and on the eleventh-century cross from the village of Sveti, in Svanetia, Georgia (now in the Mestia Museum, Georgia). For the cross see Georgii Nikolaevich Chubinashvili, *Gruzinskoe chekannoe iskusstvo* (Tbilisi: Sabch'ota Sakartvelo, 1959), pl. 36; Rusudan I. Keniia, "Predaltarnye kresty Verkhnei Svanetii," *Srednevekovoe iskusstvo. Rus'*. *Gruziia* (Moscow: Nauka, 1978), p. 223.
41. In a letter of July 2, 1971, from André Grabar to Hryhorii N. Lohvyn.
42. Works with analogous representations of Saint George are listed by Josef Myslivec, "Svatý Jiří ve východokřesťanském umění," *Byzantinoslavica* 5 (1933–34), pp. 315–25. For icons with similar depictions of Saint George and a bibliography on the subject see Viktor N. Lazarev, "Novyi pamiatnik stankovoi zhivopisi XII veka i obraz Georgiia-voina v vizantiiskom i drevnerusskom iskusstve," in *Russkaia srednevekovaiia zhivopis'* (Moscow: Nauka, 1970), p. 56.
43. See Kurt Weitzmann, "Icon Painting in the Crusader Kingdom," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 20 (1966), p. 71, n. 20.
44. See Anatolii L. Iakobson, *Srednevekovyi Khersones XII–XIV vv.*, Materialy i issledovaniia po arkhologii SSSR 17 (Moscow and Leningrad [Saint Petersburg]: Akademia Nauk SSSR, 1950), figs. 14, 15.
45. See Vasilii Putsko, "Mariupol'skyi rel'ef sv. Georgiia," *Zbornik radova Vizantološkog Instituta* 13 (1971), pp. 330–31.
46. These include the miniature of the Episodes from the History of the Maccabees in the eleventh-century Florentine Atlantic Bible (now in the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence, Ms. Laur. Edili. 126, fol. 99r); see François Souchal, *Art of the Early Middle Ages* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1968), p. 55; the twelfth-century steatite icon with three military saints (now in the Natsional'nyi Zapovidnyk "Khersones Tavriis'kyi," Sevastopol', Inv. no. 84/36 445); see Olenka Z. Pevny, "Icon with Three Military Saints," in *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, eds. Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), no. 203, pp. 300–301; and the eleventh- or twelfth-century red-schist Icon of Saint George and Saint Demetrios, from Khersones (now in the State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg, Inv. no. x 103); see Alisa Bank, *Byzantine Art in the Collections of Soviet Museums* (Leningrad [Saint Petersburg]: Aurora, 1985), pp. 298–99, figs. 147–48.
47. See Nikolai V. Pokrovskii, "Khronika," *Arkheologicheskie izvestia i zametki* 6 (1895), no. 6, p. 226.
48. The seven scenes (originally there were probably eight) in the fresco cycle of the Life of Saint George, in the Sviata Sofia Cathedral in Kyiv, provide the closest parallel for the relief icon in terms of the number of depicted episodes from the saint's life. For the fresco cycle see Dmitrii V. Ainalov and Eigor Redin, *Kievo-Sofievskii sobor. Issledovanie drevnei mozaicheskoi i freskovoi zhivopisi* (Saint Petersburg: Imperatorskaia Akademiia Nauk, 1889), pp. 87–89.
49. See Aleksandr L. Bert'e-Delagard, "K istorii khristianstva v Krymu. Mnimoie tysiacheletie. Vymysel i deistvitel'nost' v istorii Georgievskogo Balaklavskogo monastyria," *Zapiski Imperatorskogo odeskского obshchestva istorii i drevnostei* 28 (1910), p. 15.
50. Ibid., p. 9.
51. See Grigorii D. Bielov, "Shifernaia ikona is Khersonesa," *Sovetskaia arkhologiia* 2 (1960), pp. 257–63; Alisa V. Bank, "Rel'ef s izobrazheniem Georgiia iz sobraniia Ermitazha," *Issledovaniia po istorii kul'tury narodov Vostoka* (Moscow and Leningrad [Saint Petersburg]: 1960), pp. 23–24, ill. 2. See also Nikolai M. Beliaev, "Khersonesskaia moshchekhranilishchnitsa," *Seminarium Kondakovianum* 3 (1929), p. 128; S. Gaidin, "Reznaia shifernaia ikona sv. Dimitriia i Georgiia," *Sbornik Gosudarstvennogo Ermitazha* 2 (1923), pp. 31–42. Beliaev and Gaidin believe that the cults of Saint George and Saint Demetrios spread to Khersones from Thessalonike.
52. See Anatolii L. Iakobson, *Srednevekovyi Khersones XII–XIV vv.*, Materialy i issledovaniia po arkhologii

- SSSR, no. 17 (Moscow and Leningrad [Saint Petersburg]: Akademia Nauk SSSR, 1950), pp. 11–12.
53. Ibid., p. 25–27.
54. See Mikhail A. Maksimovich, “Dni i mesiatsy ukrainskogo selianina,” *Russkaia beseda* 1 (1856), p. 82.
55. See *Letopis' po Ipat'evskomu spysku* (Saint Petersburg: V. Golovin, 1871), p. 83.
56. Manuscript Archive of A. L. Bert'e–Delagard, Museum of Regional Studies, Simferopol', *Opys* 5, no. 49, “Vedomost' khristianskogo naseleniia, vyshedshego iz gorodov i dereven' Kryma v 1778g. I ostavshchikhsia posle nego khristianskikh tserkvei v Krymu.”
57. In a letter dated July 2, 1971, from André Grabar to Hryhorii N. Lohvyn.

The Earliest Surviving Icons from Bulgaria

In the Bulgarian state, founded in 681, the veneration of icons became widespread only after the adoption of Christianity as the state religion in 865. Reverence for sacred images, however, already had existed in Bulgaria during the pagan period. The well-known monumental relief of a horseman piercing a lion and accompanied by a dog carved into a cliff above the cult center at Madara in northeastern Bulgaria—considered a shrine to the god Tangra—provides evidence of this. The subject is Iranian in origin and the rider is a generic image of a mythical or epic hero. The act of hunting, a regal test of skill or royal privilege, probably symbolized the triumph of a ruler over a vanquished enemy.¹ Christianity brought changes in the nature and type of sacred images and the manner of their veneration. Along with Christian ritual and literature, new building methods and techniques for producing art, practiced in states with an established Christian tradition, such as Byzantium, were introduced into Bulgaria.

I

The Bulgarian state and its culture flourished during the first half of the tenth century under the reign of Tsar Symeon (893–927). An intensive emphasis on literature, the creation of illuminated manuscripts, and the establishment of a distinctive style of court and ecclesiastical architecture all have con-

tributed to the reputation of this period as the Golden Age of Bulgarian culture.

The oldest surviving icons from Bulgaria date to this time; they come from Preslav, the capital of the first Bulgarian state, and are executed in the glazed-ceramic technique. Archaeological excavations at a monastery in Patleina uncovered large icons in this medium, such as the Icon of Saint Theodore,² as well as smaller examples that appear to have been used as wall decorations.³ Although painted ceramics usually are associated with Eastern art, in tenth-century Constantinople it was fashionable briefly to employ ceramic cornices, pilasters, and tiles in the decoration of church interiors. This use of ceramic, a less expensive material, may reflect the increasing number of private patrons in Byzantium, who, in comparison to imperial patrons, had fewer resources. In general, painted and relief ceramic icons portray Christ, the Virgin, archangels, angels, Saint John the Baptist, apostles, holy bishops, martyrs, and saints, in addition to Christological and Mariological scenes, such as the Crucifixion and the Koimesis. The images on the tiles reveal a thorough knowledge of iconographic types current in ninth- and tenth-century Byzantine art.⁴ While the Musée du Louvre in Paris and the Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore own the largest collections of Byzantine ceramic decorations, the group of painted ceramics from Preslav exhibits the greatest variety of themes and decorative motifs.

No other types of icons survive from this early period of Bulgarian Christian culture. Nevertheless, Byzantine and Bulgarian literary sources compensate for the lack of archaeological evidence. Bulgaria adopted Christianity during the final phase of the Iconoclastic controversy, at a time when the foremost ideological issue debated in Constantinople was the veneration of icons.



Figure 1. Icon of the Theotokos Petritzonissa. About 1083; cover: Georgian, 1311. Tempera on wood, and gold repoussé (cover): 90 x 58 cm. *Katholikon*, Petritzos Monastery near Bachkovo, Bulgaria (Photo: M. Enev)

The Byzantine apostles to the Slavs, Saints Cyril (826/7–869) and Methodios (about 815–885), collaborated with the patriarch Photios (r. 858–67, 877–86) who, to cite Cyril Mango, “introduced Christianity not only dogmatically, but also visually.”⁵ The extended *Vitae* of the Slavic missionaries clearly record this aspect of their work—especially the *Vita Constantini*, which reveals that the saint in question numbered among those Byzantine theologians and clergymen who zealously contributed to the polemic against Iconoclasm. Chapter five of the *Vita Constantini* recounts the argument on the veneration of icons that took place between Saint Cyril and the deposed Patriarch John VII Grammatikos (r. 837 ?–43).⁶ Moreover, John the Exarch (d. between 917 and 921), an eminent representative of the literary circle of Preslav, translated into Old Slavonic several works by Pseudo-Dionysios the Areopagite (about 500) and Saint John of Damascus (about 675–749 or 753/54), who wrote theological and aesthetic treatises. Among the works translated by John the Exarch were forty-eight of the one hundred chapters of John of Damascus’s *On the Orthodox Faith*, including Chapter 41, entitled “On Images,” which contains many of the key arguments in support of the veneration of icons, such as the legend of King Abgar and the *Mandylion* (Holy Towel), an *acheiropoietos* (an image not made by human hands) of Christ.⁷ Other Old Bulgarian literary works also defend the veneration of icons,⁸ maintaining that the cult of icons is an integral part of Christological dogma—specifically, of the tenets of Reincarnation and Redemption. This same idea is encountered in the description by Theophanes Continuatus of the baptism of the Bulgarians during the reign of Tsar Boris I (r. 852–89), according to which a painting of the Last Judgment by a Byzantine artist named Methodios (the name may be a reference to Saint Methodios, the Byzantine missionary to the Slavs) convinced Tsar Boris I to adopt Christianity.⁹ Another Byzantine historian, Leo the Deacon (about 950–92/94),

in his *History*, records the capture of Tsar Boris II of Bulgaria (r. 969–71) and the pillaging of Preslav by the emperor John I Tzimiskes (r. 969–76). Among the treasures taken from the Bulgarian capital by the Byzantine emperor was an icon of the Theotokos (Mother of God). The sack of Preslav is also described in the *Synopsis historiarum* by John Skylitzes (fl. 2nd half of the 11th century). In the famous Madrid manuscript containing Skylitzes’ work, an icon of the Theotokos, who is identified as the “protectress of the city [of Preslav],” appears in the miniature illustrating the episode.¹⁰

A number of noteworthy icons dating to the eleventh through the fourteenth century—some painted in medieval Bulgaria and others in the major art centers of the Byzantine Empire—survive in the collections of prominent monasteries, museums, and galleries in Bulgaria. The earliest extant icon on wood is the miraculous image of the Theotokos Petritzonissa (also called Petritziotissa or Petritzonitissa) in the *katholikon* of the Petritzos Monastery near Bachkovo (fig. 1). Every year, this icon, well known for its splendid early-fourteenth-century gold repoussé cover, is carried in procession on the second day of Easter. (A legend recounts that the icon disappeared during the Turkish rule, and was later discovered in a cave above the *katholikon* on the second day of Easter.) According to the Georgian inscription on the cover, Athanasios, “a spiritual leader,” and his brother Okropir donated the icon to the Petritzos Monastery upon their arrival in 1311 from the Georgian province of T’ao (Armenian Tayk’). On the basis of the term “spiritual leader,” Akakii Shanidze, who published the inscription, assumed that the two brothers joined the monastery.¹¹ The repoussé cover testifies to the presence of Georgian monks in the Petritzos Monastery in the fourteenth century.¹²

Only recently did the icon itself become the subject of intense research. Its iconography and specific stylistic features suggest that it significantly predates the early-fourteenth-

century repoussé cover.¹³ The subject of the icon is the Theotokos Glykophilousa (Mother of God tenderly kissing), an iconographic type developed in tenth-century Byzantine art that enjoyed popularity particularly in the eastern provinces of the empire. The skill of the drawing, evident in spite of the heavy damage to the surface, conveys the hand of an accomplished master familiar with innovations in late-eleventh-century Constantinopolitan art. The icon's elegant lines, the finesse of the modeling, and the specific painting technique find their closest parallels in the late-eleventh- or early-twelfth-century Icon of the Deesis and Twelve Liturgical Feasts, from the Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine on Mount Sinai, and in the late-eleventh- or early-twelfth-century Icon of Saint John the Baptist, from Asinou in Cyprus. For this reason, Maria Panayotidi's hypothesis that Gregory Pakourianos (a Byzantine general of Georgian ancestry and the founder of the Petritzos Monastery near Bachkovo) commissioned the Icon of the Theotokos Petritzonissa seems quite plausible;¹⁴ it could have been among the twenty-eight wood icons that, according to the *typikon* of the Petritzos Monastery, the donor presented to the brotherhood in 1083.

The bilateral icon from the metropolitan Church of Saint Nicholas in the town of Melnik in southwestern Bulgaria, recently discovered and not yet fully published, is another early work of great interest (fig. 2). This comparatively large icon has a fourteenth-century repoussé cover.¹⁵ The cleaning of the icon revealed a Byzantine work of exceptional quality, with unusual iconography, the study of which provides new information regarding prototypes for bilateral processional icons.¹⁶

Represented in the central field of the icon is the Theotokos Hodegetria, with two medallions containing busts of archangels in the upper left and upper right corner, and, in the area below the medallions, the Archangel and the Virgin of the Annunciation. The icon reflects the post-Iconoclastic program of Byzantine sanctuary apses, in which the



Figure 2. Bilateral Icon of the Theotokos Hodegetria (obverse), from Melnik. About 1200. Tempera on wood: 119 x 97 cm. Rozhen Monastery, See of Nevrokop, Bulgaria (Photo: M. Enev)

Theotokos is shown in the conch of the apse and the Annunciation occupies the two flanking piers. The style of the icon dates it to the twelfth or no later than the first third of the thirteenth century. The strictly frontal pose of the Theotokos, her facial type and proportions, the almond-shaped eyes, with the pupils in the corners, and even the manner of representing the folds of the *maphorion* (a garment covering the head and shoulders) all recall images of the Theotokos from the first third of the thirteenth century, such as the Theotokos Hodegetria in the Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine on Mount Sinai.¹⁷

The severely damaged reverse of the icon, which, in the opinion of restorers, was



Figure 3. Bilateral Icon, with the Descent from the Cross, the Lamentation, and other Passion scenes (reverse), from Melnik. (Photo: M. Enev)

painted slightly earlier, depicts numerous subjects (figs. 3, 4). In spite of significant losses of paint, some of these scenes can be identified. Their overriding theme appears to be the Passion of Christ. Two large compositions, the Descent from the Cross and the Lamentation, occupy the center of the icon, flanked by twelve scenes of events from the last days of Christ's life. The top three scenes on both the left and right sides of the icon are lost, but they undoubtedly represented events either immediately preceding or occurring

during Passion Week. The six scenes distributed on the left and right sides of the lower half of the icon include the Last Supper (fourth scene from the top, on the left), the Washing of the Feet (fourth scene from the top, on the right), the Agony in the Garden (fifth scene from the top, on the left), the Betrayal (fifth scene from the top, on the right), Christ before Pilate (sixth scene from the top, on the left), and Christ before the Cross (sixth scene from the top, on the right).

The placement of the Descent from the Cross and the Lamentation at the center of the icon is unusual, and provides a terminus post quem for the dating.¹⁸ Demetrios Pallas and Hans Belting relate the emergence of portrayals of the Lamentation in the twelfth century to the introduction of the Threnos services during Holy Week.¹⁹ The Melnik icon instantiates this relationship: The two central scenes are set within the pictorial context of an extended Passion cycle illustrating passages from the Gospel that are read during Holy Week services. It is noteworthy that after the eleventh century the Passion cycle appeared frequently in monumental painting as well as on a number of *templon* (chancel-screen) crosses, however it rarely is seen on icons.²⁰

The splendid silver cover on what is considered to be the obverse of the icon suggests that in the fourteenth century the icon was positioned on a *templon* or as a *proskynetarion* (an icon stand). However, because the Melnik icon is bilateral, it probably was intended originally for liturgical use. Its uncommon scenes are related to its employment during Passion Week services.²¹ According to Belting, who explored the liturgical function of similar icons, "What was needed was either several icons—e.g., the Deposition, the Lamentation, or the Burial—or a single one, complex and functional enough to qualify for all these services at once."²² Belting cites the well-known bilateral Icon of the Theotokos Hodegetria and the Man of Sorrows, from Kastoria, as such a complex example.²³ The Melnik icon, which was not known to Belting, would also qualify as a

“complex feast image for these passion services,” and, in addition to clarifying the relationship between an icon and the liturgy, it furthers our knowledge of the development of the Passion cycle in twelfth-century Byzantine art.

The Melnik icon’s high artistic quality and unusual decorative program indicate that it was produced in a major art center in the Byzantine Empire. This is not surprising, considering the importance of Melnik in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.²⁴ In about 1195, the town was located within the borders of the restored Bulgarian state. Tsar Kalojan of Bulgaria (r. 1197–1207), who appreciated the strategic value of Melnik’s fortress, sent a relative, Alexios Slavos (d. after 1229) to serve as governor of the region. Among the numerous churches in Melnik, the most important is the Church of Saint Nicholas, decorated with remarkable twelfth- to mid-thirteenth-century murals.²⁵ Most likely, the icon under discussion was commissioned for this church.

The Icon of Saint Nicholas, from Nesebŭr, of the same period, presently exhibited in the National Art Gallery in Sofia (fig. 5),²⁶ is another early example of a hagiographical icon—a type that became widespread in the Orthodox world in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.²⁷ There are only two other approximately contemporary hagiographical icons of Saint Nicholas: one in the Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine on Mount Sinai²⁸ and the other, preserved in fragmentary condition, in Kastoria.

Stylistically, the icon from Nesebŭr reflects artistic trends of the twelfth century, juxtaposing thick layers of intense, contrasting colors. The frontal, static, and symmetrical disposition of the figure conveys a stern spiritualism, and the elongated facial features, characteristic Komnenian narrow and curved nose, small mouth, and wide, semicircular eyelids all date the icon to the second half of the twelfth century. The graphic treatment of the furrows of the forehead as well as the white, linear highlights in the hair and beard recall the stylization of Late Komnenian art.

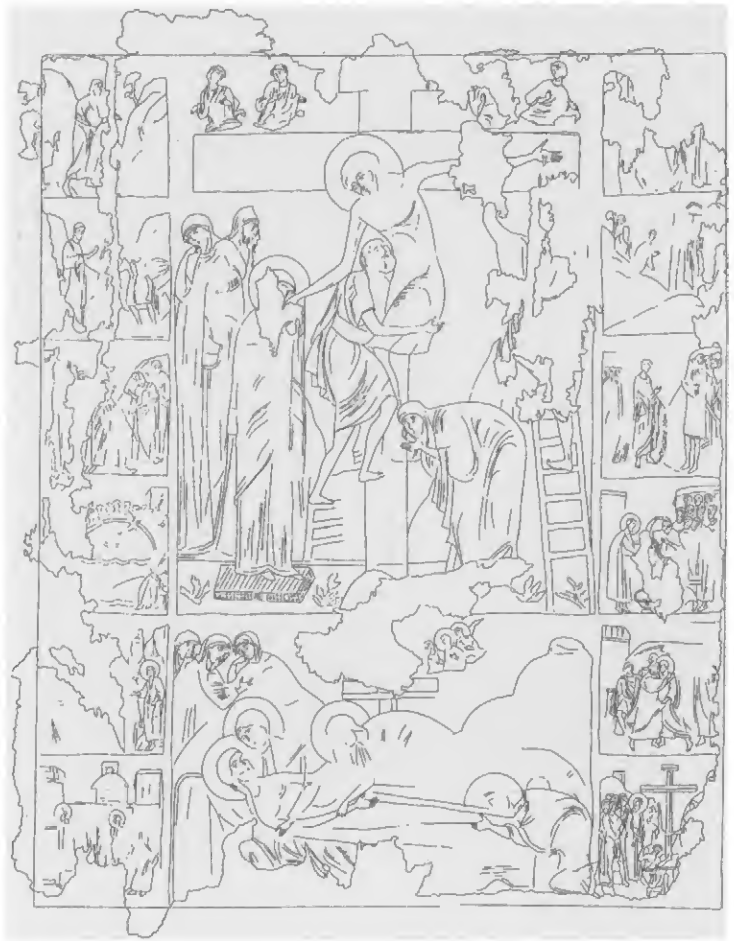


Figure 4. Bilateral Icon, with the Descent from the Cross, the Lamentation, and other Passion scenes (reverse), from Melnik. Drawing by S. Mechkhueva

Nesebŭr (the medieval city of Messambria), a leading port and one of the foremost cities in medieval Bulgaria, was an important art center in the thirteenth century. As with other Black Sea towns, in the Middle Ages control over Messambria frequently alternated between Byzantium and Bulgaria. The city was under strong Byzantine influence and had a predominantly Greek population, but its hinterland always remained ethnically Bulgarian.



Figure 5. Hagiographical Icon of Saint Nicholas, from Nesebŭr. About 1200. Tempera on wood: 102 x 81 cm. National Art Gallery, Old Bulgarian Art Collection, The Crypt, Sofia (Inv. no. 14)

II

The fourteenth century—specifically, the period beginning with the reign of Tsar Ivan Alexander (1331–71) and ending with the Ottoman conquest of the capital city Tŭrnovo in 1393—can justly be considered the second Golden Age of Bulgarian culture.

During the forty years of Tsar Ivan Alexander's reign, the Bulgarian state enjoyed relative peace. In spite of the complex politi-

cal situation and the spread of religious heresies, literature and art flourished. Tsar Ivan Alexander was a generous patron of the arts and the autocephalous Bulgarian Church supported a highly developed monastic tradition. During this period developments in the spiritual and artistic life of Bulgaria paralleled the leading cultural trends in Byzantium, and works of art rivaling those of the Byzantine Empire were produced.

The Theotokos Hodegetria, in the Natsionalen Arkheologicheski Muzei (National Archaeological Museum) in Sofia, an example of the Early Palaiologan style, is a rare, large-scale mosaic icon (fig. 6). At the end of the nineteenth century, Strzygowski published the icon after discovering it in the iconostasis of the Church of Saint George in the small village of Ereğli (ancient Perinthos; later, Byzantine Thracian Herakleia), not far from Istanbul.²⁹ During World War I, the icon was brought to the National Archaeological Museum in Sofia, where it was restored (fig. 7), but despite its high artistic quality, it is barely mentioned in general surveys of Byzantine art.³⁰ Recently, in the context of her work on the mosaic Icon of the Theotokos Hodegetria, from Palermo, Krickelberg-Pütz studied the Icon of the Theotokos Hodegetria, in Sofia, and dated it to about 1300,³¹ as did Demus.³²

The icon from Ereğli is probably a mosaic replica of the famous Holy Icon of the Theotokos, from the Hodegon Monastery in Constantinople. According to Demus, all figural mosaic icons “are nothing but mosaic reproductions of painted icons, and, as far as we know, were regarded, treated, and used exactly like large-scale icons in painting. It seems they were destined solely for ecclesiastic use, to be hung on the walls of a church or to be displayed on tables (*proskynetaria* or *analogia*).”³³ As the icon faithfully reproduces an established type, its iconography cannot be used to date it, nor can we rely on information about the church in which it was found to establish a date. From the Early Byzantine through the Palaiologan periods, Thracian



Figure 6. Icon of the Theotokos Hodegetria (before restoration), from the iconostasis, Church of Saint George, Ereğli, Turkey. Byzantine, about 1300. Mosaic: 93 x 68 cm. National Archaeological Museum, Sofia (Photo: Collection École des Hautes Études, Paris, Inv. no. C-1562)



Figure 7. Icon of the Theotokos Hodegetria (after restoration) (Photo: M. Enev)

Herakleia was the seat of an archbishopric, with a large metropolitan church. Historical sources frequently mention the metropolitans of Herakleia,³⁴ among the most famous of whom was the well-known writer Philotheos Kokkinos (r. 1347–53). Because of Herakleia's important ecclesiastical status and its proximity to Constantinople, it is possible that the icon was an imperial or aristocratic donation to the metropolitan church, made during the Early Palaiologan period. Of course, it simply may have been brought from Constantinople in post-Byzantine times, when Ereğli was under the jurisdiction of the archbishopric of Con-

stantinople, and placed in the Church of Saint George, which still continued to function after the destruction of the metropolitan church.³⁵

The lack of other precisely dated extant mosaic icons with known patrons or provenances makes dating the icon from Ereğli difficult, although dated works of art with similar stylistic features are of some help in general. The facial types of the figures on the Ereğli icon, the modeling of volumes, the color scheme, and the placement of the tesserae find parallels in several major Constantinopolitan works from the early fourteenth century, the closest of which are



Figure 8. Hagiographical Icon of Saint George and Saint Demetrios. Late 13th century. Tempera on wood: 85.5 x 81 cm. Ecclesiastical Museum of History and Archaeology, Sofia (Inv. no. 140) (Photo: M. Enev)

the mosaics, dated to the 1320s, in the church of the Chora Monastery (Kariye Camii). Comparison of the Ereğli Theotokos with the mosaic of the Theotokos in the north dome of the narthex, or the Theotokos in the Deesis composition with Isaac Komnenos (r. 1093–1152) in the inner narthex reveals obvious similarities. Also, the Christ Child on the Ereğli icon and the Christ Child depicted in the north dome of the narthex share many affinities. The basic flesh tones on the Ereğli icon and in the mosaics of the church of the Chora Monastery are dark green, with white and pink used for highlights on the faces and hands and bright red to define the contours

of the noses, eyes, and fingers.³⁶ The style of the Ereğli icon also resembles that of the mosaic Icon of the Theotokos Episkepsis, in the Byzantine Museum in Athens.³⁷ The softness and finesse of the lines as well as the classical quality of the modeling associate the Ereğli icon with the refined culture of Constantinople that flourished at the court of Andronikos II Palaiologos (r. 1282–1328).³⁸

In addition to this exquisite Palaiologan work from Constantinople, Bulgarian museums also possess several interesting Palaiologan icons from other artistic centers, as, for example, the late-thirteenth- or early-fourteenth-century Icon of Saint George and Saint Demetrios from Sozopol (ancient Apollonia), another important Black Sea town in Bulgaria (fig. 8). The icon is in three parts: a relief of two equestrian saints; a carved ornamental border; and a second, much later (probably sixteenth-century) frame, decorated with scenes from the lives of the two saints.³⁹ The relief icon dates to the thirteenth century, when Constantinople was under Latin rule, so there is no doubt that it was influenced by western models.⁴⁰

The well-known bilateral icon from Nesebŭr with Christ Pantokrator on the obverse and the Theotokos Eleousa (Merciful Mother of God) on the reverse, now in the crypt of the Church of Alexander Nevsky in Sofia, can be dated to the fourteenth century.⁴¹ The figures of prophets, depicted on both the obverse and reverse of the frame, date to the same period. Their pronounced monumentality and plasticity contrast with the abstractly expressed spirituality of earlier art, and the linear stylization serves to enhance rather than diminish the modeling of the forms. A balanced distribution of volumes and a restrained color scheme characterize this work, generating a sense of calm and contemplation in the viewer.

Early Palaiologan culture revived the models of ancient art cherished by Byzantine humanists and exerted a strong influence on the art of all Orthodox nations, including Bulgaria. Palaiologan artistic innovations,

ideas, themes, and styles gradually affected fourteenth-century Bulgarian art. Members of the tsar's court, Bulgarian aristocracy, and large monastic communities commissioned works that adopted and then reinterpreted Constantinopolitan stylistic features. The fine Bulgarian icon of the most venerated Bulgarian saint, John of Rila (about 870/80–946), dated to the reign of Tsar Ivan Alexander (r. 1331–71), is a good example of such a work (fig. 9).⁴² The veneration of this saint in Bulgaria developed during the eleventh and twelfth centuries at the Rila Monastery that he founded; at the same time, hagiographical works and a hymnographic cycle dedicated to the saint were being composed. In the fourteenth century, the cult of this Bulgarian anchorite attained further prominence. The enhanced importance of monasticism, the general interest in mysticism, and the spread of hesychasm in Bulgarian society all contributed to this ascetic saint's renewed popularity. New *Vitae* and liturgies were written in the saint's honor, and his life became the subject of various paintings. The earliest of these cycles decorates the chapel in Hreljo's Tower in the Rila Monastery.⁴³ Furthermore, the icon under discussion is one of the oldest surviving portraits of the saint, who is shown wearing the attire and carrying the attributes of an ascetic. His costume consists of monastic robes, a chiton, and an *analauion*, and he holds a cross, a rosary, and a scroll. The figure is well proportioned, the face and hands are softly modeled in ocher, with white highlights, and dark brown is used for the shadows. In addition to the high quality of the painting, the psychological characteristics of the image differentiate it from all other representations of the saint. For example, the fresco of Saint John of Rila, in the fourteenth-century Church of Saint John the Theologian at the Zemen Monastery in Bulgaria, represents him as a wretched, fanatical ascetic,⁴⁴ but the icon depicts Saint John as a philosopher, his pensive visage endowed with a pervasive calm and a deep spirituality. Stylistic parallels for the icon can be found among images dating to the first



Figure 9. Icon of Saint John of Rila. Bulgarian, 1335–42. Tempera on wood: 77.5 x 56 cm. Rila Monastery Museum (Inv. no. 282) (Photo: M. Enev)

half of the fourteenth century, in which the classical refinement of the drawing and modeling contribute to the quality of contemplation and intellectual detachment from reality imparted by the figures. Examples of such images include the frescoes of Saint David of Thessalonike and of the hymnographers Theophanes and Kosmas of Maiouma in the *parekklesion* (side chapel) of the church at the Chora Monastery (Kariye Camii) in Constantinople.⁴⁵ The Icon of Saint John of Rila also displays stylistic analogies with the frescoes executed between 1335 and 1342, under the patronage of the *protosebastos* Hreljo, in the chapel of the Hreljo Tower at the Rila Monastery.⁴⁶ It is possible that this same *protosebastos* commissioned the icon for the monastery, and that it dates to the same period as the Hreljo Tower frescoes.



Figure 10. Icon of the Synaxis of the Archangels, from the Church of the Holy Archangels, Bachkovo Monastery, Bulgaria. About 1360. Tempera on wood: 123.5 x 76.5 cm. National Art Gallery, Old Bulgarian Art Collection, The Crypt, Sofia (Inv. no. 1040) (Photo: M. Enev)

The Icon of the Theotokos Hodegetria, originally from the Monastery of the Theotokos Eleousa in Nesebŭr and now in the Natsionalen Istoricheski Muzei (National Historical Museum) in Sofia, also dates to

the reign of Tsar Ivan Alexander (1331–71). The dedicatory inscription on its silver cover records its commissioning in 1342 by Tsar Ivan Alexander’s uncle.⁴⁷ Nevertheless, the icon cannot be discussed in the context of the art of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom, since it was entirely overpainted sometime in the sixteenth or the seventeenth century.

The Synaxis of the Archangels—the icon that served as the palladium of the Church of the Holy Archangels at the Bachkovo Monastery but is now in the crypt of the Church of Alexander Nevsky—is yet another work from the time of Tsar Ivan Alexander (fig. 10).⁴⁸ The icon shows two archangels facing forward and supporting a medallion between them—iconography that dates back to the early twelfth century. However, on the medallion, the image of the Theotokos Platytera ton Ouranon (Mother of God wider than the heavens) holding the Christ Child replaces the traditional representation of Christ Emmanuel. The restrained beauty of the colors, the skillful modeling of the flesh, the white, fan-shaped striations that highlight the eyes and the noses, as well as certain stylistic similarities with several well-known icons in other Orthodox countries—for example the Icon of the Archangel Gabriel from the Dečani Monastery in Serbia⁴⁹—enable us to attribute the Icon of the Synaxis of the Archangels to the second half of the fourteenth century. Since Tsar Ivan Alexander was the patron of extensive building and art projects at the Bachkovo Monastery, he could have presented this icon to the monastery in the early 1360s, shortly before the monastery fell to the Ottoman Turks in 1364.

Another icon of the Theotokos in Nesebŭr that dates to the fourteenth century (fig. 11) bears a rare epithet, “He kyria tes zoes” (Our lady of [eternal] life), to identify the Theotokos. The Christ Child is being held by the Theotokos in a pose that recalls the disposition of the Christ Child on the liturgical paten in scenes of the Melismos (the ritual breaking of the consecrated bread before Communion). The sharp contrasts of

warm and cool colors and of highlights and shadows, as well as the energetic treatment of the drapery, especially noticeable in the garments of the archangels in the four corner medallions, provide a sufficient basis for dating this icon to the 1380s or 1390s.⁵⁰

Several fourteenth-century icons in Bulgaria are significant not only for the place they occupy in Bulgarian culture but also for their contribution to our knowledge of Byzantine art. These works possess original characteristics that may be seen as emblems for certain stages in the development of Byzantine art and of the art of the Orthodox world in general. An example is the bilateral icon from the Poganovo Monastery, which depicts the Theotokos Kataphyge (Mother of God of Refuge) and Saint John the Theologian on one side (fig. 12) and the Vision of the Prophet Ezekiel on the other (fig. 13) (the icon was donated to the National Archaeological Museum in Sofia in 1920). On the basis of his interpretation of the donor's inscription, the eminent Bulgarian scholar Todor Gerasimov identified the patron of the icon as the Byzantine empress Helena Dragaš, the wife of Manuel II Palaiologos (r. 1391–1425), and dated the icon to 1395.⁵¹ André Grabar, Andreas Xyngopoulos, Kurt Weitzmann, and Atanas Bozhkov all studied the icon, and agreed with Gerasimov's dating.⁵² Gordana Babić, however, identified the donor as Helena, the wife of John Uglješa (r. 1366–71), the Serbian *despotes* of Serres, and dated the work to 1371.⁵³ Unfortunately, the donor's inscription is no longer visible, even with infrared photography, so that his or her identity remains uncertain.

The icon, a work of the highest artistic accomplishment, is unprecedented iconographically. It was executed by an extremely talented master as a special commission at the request of a distinguished donor for a specific occasion, and its commemorative significance is unassailable. The Vision of the Prophet Ezekiel, who was a herald of the Last Judgment, symbolizes the resurrection and salvation of the righteous faithful.⁵⁴ The Theotokos



Figure 11. Icon of the Theotokos “He kyria tes zoes,” from Nesebŭr. Late 14th century. Tempera on wood: 120 x 98 cm. National Art Gallery, Old Bulgarian Art Collection, The Crypt, Sofia (Inv. no. 1171) (Photo: M. Enev)

Kataphyge and Saint John the Theologian also refer to the Resurrection and Salvation; the epithet Kataphyge, rarely associated with the Theotokos, is borrowed from Byzantine hymnography, which recognizes the Mother of God as a supporter of the faithful as well as a refuge for righteous souls striving for spiritual salvation.⁵⁵ The liturgy for the Dormition of Saint John the Theologian, the patron saint of the Poganovo Monastery,



Figure 12. Bilateral Icon, with the Theotokos Kataphyge and Saint John the Theologian (obverse), from the Poganovo Monastery. About 1370/95. Tempera on wood: 93 x 62 cm. National Archaeological Museum, Sofia (Inv. no. 2057) (Photo: K. Tanchev)



Figure 13. Bilateral Icon, with the Vision of the Prophet Ezekiel (reverse of figure 12) (Photo: K. Tanchev)

composed by Archbishop Symeon of Thessalonike (r. 1416/17–29), reveals the relationship between the saint and the Theotokos, noting that the apostle, a theologian, experienced a change in his life when the Theotokos was entrusted into his care, each finding refuge and support in the other.⁵⁶ The icon offers a visual interpretation of the liturgical text and pays respect to Saint John in a manner similar to the celebration of the liturgy honoring him. The eschatological theme of the icon makes it clear that this work also commemorates and pays homage to a recently deceased relative of the donor.

The quality of the Poganovo icon ranks it among the greatest works of art from the last decades of the Byzantine Empire. The icon displays such elements of classical beauty valued in

the fourteenth century as exquisite contours, ideally balanced volumes and compositional details, gently modeled folds, and harmonious, warm hues. However, the Poganovo icon conveys a distinctive mood of pensiveness, contemplation, and forceful emotion; these dramatic qualities indicate that the icon is not a product of early-fourteenth-century Constantinople. Probably created in Thessalonike during the siege of the city by the Turks, the icon captures the dramatic intensity characteristic of Byzantine art from the end of the fourteenth century. This stylistic tendency mirrors the anxiety of those tragic times, when most regions of Byzantium, the Balkan Slavic states, and other centers of Orthodox medieval culture in southeastern Europe succumbed to domination by successive Ottoman conquerors.

1. Regardless of how the relief—which measures 2.72 x 2.85 m—is interpreted, its existence proves that images were venerated in Bulgaria in pagan times. For additional information see Veselin Beshevliev, ed., *Madarskiiat konnik* (Sofia: Bulgarska akademia na Naoukite, 1956); Veselin Beshevliev, *Die protobulgarische Periode der bulgarischen Geschichte* (Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert, 1981), pp. 473–76; Zhivko Aladzhev, “Za kulta kum Tangra v srednovekovna Bulgaria,” *Arkheologiya* no. 1–2 (1983), pp. 76–79; Rasho Rashev, “Konnikut v starobulgarskoto izkustvo,” *Arkheologiya* no. 2–3 (1983), pp. 60–70; Oksana Minaeva, *From Paganism to Christianity: Formation of Early Medieval Bulgarian Art (681–972)* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1996), pp. 47–72.
2. The icon measures 55 x 44 centimeters. See *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, eds. Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), no. 222, p. 329.
3. These smaller tiles measure 22 x 12–13 centimeters.
4. For the most recent publication on ceramic icons see Totiu Totev, “L’Atelier de céramique peinte du monastère royal de Preslav,” *Cahiers archéologiques* 35 (1987), pp. 65–80; *idem*, *The ceramic icon in medieval Bulgaria* (Sofia: St. Kliment Ohridski University Press, 2000).
5. See Cyril Mango, “The Liquidation of Iconoclasm and the Patriarch Photius,” in *Iconoclasm: Papers Given at the Ninth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, University of Birmingham*, eds. Anthony Bryer and Judith Herrin (Birmingham, England: University of Birmingham Press, 1977), p. 138.
6. See Boniu Angelov and Khristo Nikolov Kodov, eds., *Kliment Okhridski*, vol. 3, *Subrani suchineniia* (Sofia: Bulgarska Akademiia na Naukite, 1973), p. 92. See also Francis Dvornik, *Les Légendes de Constantin et Méthode vues de Byzance* (Prague: Orbis, 1933), pp. 68–85.
7. See Linda Sadnik, *Ekthesis akribes tes orthodoxou pisteos des Hl. Johannes von Damaskos*, in *der Übersetzung des Exarchen Johannes*, vol. 3, in *Monumenta linguae slavicae dialecti veteris. Fontes et dissertationes* 16 (Freiburg im Breisgau: U. W. Weiher, 1983), pp. 52–58; Kurt Weitzmann, “The Mandyion and Constantine Porphyrogenetos,” *Cahiers archéologiques* 2 (1960), pp. 163–84.
8. See Krasimir Stanchev, “Konstantin-Kiril filosof i formirano na esteticheskite vuzgledi v srednovekovna Bulgaria,” in *Konstantin-Kiril filosof, bulgarski i slavianski purvouchitel: sbornik statii*, Petur Dinekov and Boniu Angelov, eds. (Sofia: Nauka i izkustvo, 1983), p. 201; Elka Bakalova, “Die Slavenapostel Kyrill und Method und die byzantinische Kunst des 9. Jahrhunderts,” in *Symposium Methodianum: Beiträge der internationalen Tagungen in Regensburg, 17. bis 24. April 1985 zum Gedenken an den 1100. Todestag des Hl. Method*, Klaus Trost, Ekkehard Voelkl, and Erwin Wedel, eds., *Selecta Slavica* 13 (Neuried: Hieronymus, 1988), pp. 33–66.
9. See Theophanes Continuatus, *Chronographia*, ed. Immanuel Bekker, *Corpus scriptorum historiae byzantinae* (Bonn: E. Weber, 1838), p. 163; Cyril Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire 312–1453* (1972; reprinted, Toronto: Medieval Academy of America, 1986), pp. 190–91.
10. See Leo the Deacon, *Historia*, ed. Carolus Benedictus Hase (Bonn: E. Weber, 1828), p. 158; John Skylitzes, *Synopsis historiarum*, ed. Hans Peter Thurn, in *Corpus fontium historiae byzantinae*, Series Berolinensis 5 (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1973), pp. 10–14, 310; André Grabar and Manoussos I. Manoussacas, *L’Illustration du manuscrit de Skylitzès de la Bibliothèque Nationale de Madrid*, Bibliothèque de l’Institut hellénique d’études byzantines et post-byzantines de Venise 10 (Venice: Institut hellénique d’études byzantines et post-byzantines de Venise, 1979), fig. 221, pl. XXXIV; Atanas Bozhkov, *Miniatiuri ot Madridskiiat nikopis na Ioan Skilitza* (Sofia: Bulgarska Akademiia na Naukite, 1972), p. 113, fig. 67. According to Nancy Ševčenko, the choice of the image of the Theotokos with the Christ Child, now known as the Eleousa type, for the illustration in the Madrid Chronicle of John Skylitzes may be a possible anachronism on the part of the artist. See Nancy Ševčenko, “Icons in the Liturgy,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 45 (1991), p. 46.
11. See Akakii Gavrilovich Shanidze, *Gruzinskii monastyr v Bolgarii i ego Tipik. Gruzinskaia redaktsiia Tipika* (Tbilisi: Metsniereba, 1971), pp. 355–62.
12. For information on the cover of the icon see Nikolai Likhachev, *Istoricheskoe znachenie italo-grecheskoi ikonopisi. Izobrazhenie Bogomateri v proizvedeniiakh italo-grecheskikh ikonopistsev i ikh vliianie na kompozitsii nekotorykh proslavlennykh russkikh ikon* (Saint Petersburg: 1911), p. 136, fig. 134; Georgii Nikolaevich Chubinashvili, *Gruzinskoe chekannoe iskusstvo* (Tbilisi: Sabch’ota Sakartvelo, 1959), vol. 1, pp. 233, 625–26, fig. 486; Alisa Bank, “Novye cherty v vizantiiskom prikladnom iskusstve XIV–XV vekov,” in *Moravska skola i njeno doba/L’École de la Morava et son temps* (Belgrade: Filozofski fakultet–Odeljenjé za istoriju umetnosti, 1972), p. 58; André Grabar, *Les Revêtements en or et en argent des icônes byzantines du Moyen Âge*, Bibliothèque de l’Institut hellénique d’études byzantines et post-byzantines de Venise 7 (Venice: Institut hellénique d’études byzantines et post-byzantines de Venise, 1975), p. 34, note 9. Bank and Grabar consider the cover to be Byzantine rather than Georgian, probably produced in the Balkans. The epithet ΒΑΧΕΡΝΙΩΤΙΣΑ appears on the icon’s cover.
13. Until recently, all publications ascribed the icon to the fourteenth century, the date of the repoussé cover. See Krüsti Miiatev, “Kum ikonografiata na Bogoroditsa–Umlenie,” *Izvestiia na Bulgarskii Arkheologicheski Institut* 3 (1925), pp. 165–93; Atanas Bozhkov, *Bulgarian Icons* (Sofia: Bulgarski khudozhnik, 1987), pl. 37. M. Panayotidi has redated the icon; see Maria Panayotidi, “He eikona tes Panagias Glykophilousas sto monasteri tou Petritzou Bačkovo sto Boulgaria,” in *Euphrosynon: aphieroma ston Manole*

- Chatzedake, vol. 2, Evangelia Kypraiou, ed., Demosieumata tou Archaialogikou Deltiou 46 (Athens: Ekdose tou Tameiou Archaialogikon Poron kai Apallotrioseon, 1991–92), pp. 459–68.
14. See Maria Panayotidi, “He eikona tes Panagias Glykophilousas sto monasteri tou Petritzou Bačkovo sto Boulgaria,” in *Euphrosynon: aphieroma ston Manole Chatzedake*, vol. 2, Evangelia Kypraiou, ed., Demosieumata tou Archaialogikou Deltiou 46 (Athens: Ekdose tou Tameiou Archaialogikon Poron kai Apallotrioseon, 1992), pp. 459–68.
 15. The icon was first mentioned in Paul Perdrizet, “Melnik et Rossano,” *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique* 31 (1907), p. 22. Perdrizet found the icon in the metropolitan Church of Saint Nicholas in Melnik. To date, only the repoussé cover has been published. See Suzy Dufrenne, “Une Icône byzantine de Melnik,” *Byzantion* 38 (1968), pp. 18–27; André Grabar, *Les Revêtements en or et en argent des icônes byzantines du Moyen Âge*, Bibliothèque de l’institut hellénique d’études byzantines et post-byzantines de Venise 7 (Venice: Institut hellénique d’études byzantines et post-byzantines de Venise, 1975), pp. 25–26, note 5, fig. 7. For information on the icon see Elka Bakalova, “A two-sided icon from Melnik,” in *Recueil dédié à la mémoire de D. Mouriki* (Athens: Plytekhion, in press). The icon was first exhibited in Geneva in 1988. See *Trésors d’art médiéval Bulgare. VIIe–XVe siècle* (Berne: Musée d’Art et d’Histoire de Genève and Benteli Verlag, 1988), plates 148–49. See Charles Delvoye, “Chronique archéologique,” *Byzantion* 62 (1992) pp. 518–21. The Geneva catalogue incorrectly identifies the central scene on the reverse of the icon as the Crucifixion. Today the icon belongs to the see of Nevrokop and is kept in the Rozhen Monastery.
 16. Lozinka Koinova supervised the removal of the cover and the careful conservation of the painting, and, despite its heavy damage and losses, was able to identify the original subject of the icon. See Lozinka Koinova, *Ikoni ot Melnishkita kraia* (Sofia: Septemvri, 1980), pp. 6, 124, fig. 1, 2.
 17. On the icon from Sinai see Doula Mouriki, “Variants of the Hodegetria on two thirteenth-century Sinai icons,” *Cahiers archéologiques* 39 (1991), pp. 157–60, figs. 1, 4, 5.
 18. Painted icons depicting the Descent from the Cross did not appear before the eleventh century and became particularly popular during the thirteenth century. Demetrios Pallas believes that the Icon of the Descent from the Cross replaced the Icon of the Crucifixion in the service of the *orthros* on Good Friday. See Demetrios I. Pallas, *Die Passion und Bestattung Christi in Byzanz: der Ritus, das Bild*, Miscellanea Byzantina Monacensia 2 (Munich: W. & I. M. Salzer, 1965), pp. 105–6. According to Kurt Weitzmann, the Theotokos at the foot of the cross, kissing the hand of her son, is an image introduced about 1100. See Kurt Weitzmann, “The Origin of the Threnos,” in *De Artibus Opuscula 40: Essays in Honor of Erwin Panofsky*, ed. Millard Meiss (New York: New York University Press, 1961), pp. 481–82. Robin Cormack associates the presence of John and the weeping woman at The Crucifixion with the sermon on “the threnos of the Theotokos” in the service for Good Friday by Bishop George of Nikomedeia (r. about 860). See Robin Cormack, “Painting after Iconoclasm,” in *Iconoclasm: Papers given at the Ninth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, University of Birmingham*, eds. Anthony Bryer and Judith Herrin (Birmingham, England: University of Birmingham Press, 1977), p. 153, fig. 134. Iconographically, the closest parallel for the two scenes on the reverse of the Melnik icon is provided by the icon from Lagourka (Upper Svanetiia, Georgia), which, although dated by Alibegashvili to the eleventh century, is probably later. See Gaiané Alibegashvili, “Pamiatniki sredn-evekovoi stankovoi zhivopisi iz Verkhnei Svanetii,” in *Srednevekovoe iskusstvo: Rus’ i Gruzii* (Moscow: Nauka, 1978), pp. 160–66, fig. 162; Kurt Weitzmann, Gaiané Alibegashvili, Anelli Volskaja, Gordana Babić, Manolis Chatzidakis, Mikhail Alpatov, Teodora Voinescu, and Wilhelm Nyssen, *Die Ikonen* (Freiburg, Basel, and Vienna: Herder, 1982), p. 109. See also Hans Belting, *The Image and its Public in the Middle Ages: Form and Function of Early Paintings of the Passion*, trans. Mark Bartusis and Raymond Meyer (New Rochelle, N.Y.: Aristide D. Caratzas, 1990), p. 97, note 11.
 19. See Demetrios I. Pallas, *Die Passion und Bestattung Christi in Byzanz: der Ritus, das Bild*, Miscellanea Byzantina Monacensia 2 (Munich: W. & I. M. Salzer, 1965), pp. 38 f., 42 f., 50 f.; Hans Belting, “An Image and Its Function in the Liturgy: The Man of Sorrows in Byzantium,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 34/35 (1981), p. 3; *idem*, *The Image and its Public in the Middle Ages: Form and Function of Early Paintings of the Passion*, trans. Mark Bartusis and Raymond Meyer (New Rochelle, N.Y.: Aristide D. Caratzas, 1990), pp. 98–99, 101. For a further discussion of the Lamentation scene see Henry Maguire, “The Depiction of Sorrow in Middle Byzantine Art,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 31 (1977), pp. 123–75; *idem*, *Art and Eloquence in Byzantium* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), pp. 101–8.
 20. Iconographic parallels for the scenes on the Melnik icon can be found on an eleventh-century tetraptych at Sinai. See George and Maria Sotiriou, *Ikônes du Mont Sinai*, vol. 1, *Ikônes*, Collection de l’Institut français d’Athènes 100 (Athens: Institut français d’Athènes, 1956), p. 123, fig. 145; Kurt Weitzmann, “Byzantine Miniature and Icon Painting in the Eleventh Century,” in *Studies in Classical and Byzantine Manuscript Illumination*, ed. Herbert L. Kessler (London and Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1971), pp. 296–97, fig. 300. For the painted crosses see Kurt Weitzmann, “Three Painted Crosses at Sinai,” in *Studies in the Art at Sinai: Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), pp. 409–14, figs. 1–3. See also Manolis Chatzidakis, “L’Évolution de l’icône au 11e–13e siècle et la transformation du templon,” in *Actes du XV^e Congrès inter-*

- national d'études byzantines* (1976), *Rapports et co-rapports*, Art et archéologie 3 (Athens: Association Internationale des études byzantines, 1976), pp. 179–80. Later icons with the Crucifixion and Christological scenes are rare. One example is the fourteenth-century icon from Sinai. See: Panayotis L. Vokotopoulos [Vocotopoulos], *Hellenike technē. Byzantines eikones* (Athens: Ekdotike Athenon, 1995), pp. 103, 210, fig. 83.
21. See note 18, above.
22. See Hans Belting, "An Image and Its Function in the Liturgy: The Man of Sorrows in Byzantium," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 34/35 (1981), p. 6. For a further discussion of the use of icons in the liturgy see Hans Belting, *Bild und Kult: Eine Geschichte des Bildes vor dem Zeitalter der Kunst* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1991), pp. 293–304. N. Ševčenko has investigated the possible broader use of similar icons to accompany the liturgy; see Nancy Ševčenko, "Icons in the Liturgy," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 45 (1991), p. 54, fig. 67.
23. See Hans Belting, "An Image and Its Function in the Liturgy: The Man of Sorrows in Byzantium," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 34/35 (1981), p. 6. For the icon see *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, eds. Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997) no. 72, pp. 125–26.
24. The Arab geographer Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Idrīsī (about 1100–about 1165) describes Melnik as "a large and prominent city, one of the central cities of Byzantium, and one of the most ancient in its foundation." See Boris Nedkov, *Bŭlgariia i susednite i zemi prez XII vek spored "Geografiata" na Idrisi* (Sofia: Nauka i izkustro, 1960), p. 39. See also Petur Tivčev, "Sur les Cités byzantines aux XI–XII siècles," *Byzantinobulgarica* 1 (1962), p. 155. For the history of Melnik in the twelfth through the fourteenth century see Ivan Dujčev, "Melnik au Moyen Âge," *Byzantion* 38 (1968), pp. 28–41; Theodoros N. Vlachos, *Die Geschichte der byzantinischen Stadt Melenikon* (Thessalonike: Institute for Balkan Studies, 1969), pp. 31–92; Günther Prinzing, review of *Die Geschichte der byzantinischen Stadt Melenikon* by Theodoros N. Vlachos, *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 64 (1971), pp. 119–23. In 1272, Melnik was under the jurisdiction of the metropolitan of Serres but by 1285, it had its own metropolitan. On this subject see Giorgio Fedalto, *Hierarchia Ecclesiastica Orientalis* (Padua: Messaggero, 1988), p. 447. For information on the metropolitan of Melnik during the fourteenth century see Otto Kresten, "Fünf nachgezeichnete Metropolitenumterschriften aus der ersten Amtsperiode des Patriarchen Philotheos Kokkinos im Patriarchatsregister von Konstantinopel," *Österreichische Osthefte* 33 (1991), pp. 174–93.
25. For the murals in the Church of Saint Nicholas see Liliana Mavrodinova, *Tsirkvata sveti Nikola pri Melnik* (Sofia: Bulgarski khudozhnik, 1975).
26. The icon was first published by Prashkov, who dated it to the thirteenth century. See Liuben Prashkov, *Ikones bulgares IXe–XIXe siècle: Catalogue de l'exposition* (Paris: Musée du Petit-Palais, 1976), p. 17, fig. 16. Also see Kostadinka G. K. Paskaleva, "Trois Icônes de Nessebar du XIIIe siècle," *Byzantinobulgarica* 7 (1981), pp. 368–69, fig. 1. The upper part of the icon has been cut away and the remaining fragments of scenes in this area are not identifiable; those scenes on the lower part are completely abraded. Four severely damaged scenes survive to the left and right of the central image. On the left there are traces of a birth scene, inscribed ΓΕΝΗΣΙΣ, with the birthing couch and women bathing a child in a font still discernible; below is a composition with a partially preserved inscription ΑΓΙΟΣ ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟΣ ΝΗΠΙ On the right are the remains of an image with the fragmentary inscription ΣΟΖΟΣ . . . ΤΡΙΑ that may have illustrated the story of the three maidens Ο ΑΓΙΟΣ ΣΟΖΟΣ, above a scene showing Saint Nicholas saving three men from execution.
27. The earliest hagiographic icon of Saint Nicholas dates to the eleventh century. See Kurt Weitzmann, "Byzantine Miniature and Icon Painting in the Eleventh Century," in *Studies in Classical and Byzantine Manuscript Illumination*, ed. Herbert L. Kessler (London and Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), pp. 282–83; Nancy Ševčenko, *The Life of Saint Nicholas in Byzantine Art* (Turin: Bottega d'Erasmus, 1983), *passim*.
28. See Kurt Weitzmann, "Fragments of an Early St. Nicholas Triptych on Mount Sinai," *Deltion tes Christianikes Archaeologikes Hetaireias*, 4th period, 4 (1964–65), pp. 1–23.
29. See Josef Strzygowski, "Die Kathedrale von Herakleia," *Jahreshefte des österreichischen archäologischen Institutes in Wien, Beiblatt* (Baden bei Wein: R. M. Rohrer, 1898), pp. 20–26. Also see Nikodim P. Kondakov, *Ikonoграфия Bogomateri*, vol. 2 (Saint Petersburg: Tipografia Imperatorskoi Akademii nauk, 1915), pp. 198–99, fig. 91, who describes the icon as "a rough but important masterpiece of the Theotokos Hodegetria type, based on the Constantinopolitan icon of the Theotokos." A photograph of the icon prior to restoration, within the iconostasis of the Church of Saint George, is preserved in the collection of the École des Hautes Études in Paris (Inv. no. C–1562); V. Glasberg was kind enough to send me a copy of this photograph.
30. See Charles Diehl, *Manuel d'art byzantin*, 2nd ed., rev. and exp., vol. 2 (Paris: A. Picard, 1926), p. 870; Sergio Bettini, "Appunti per lo studio dei mosaici portativi bizantini," *Felix Ravenna* 46 (1938), p. 15; Viktor N. Lazarev, *Storia della pittura bizantina* (Turin: Giulio Einaudi, 1967), pp. 284, 336; Viktor Glasberg, *Répertoire de la mosaïque médiévale pariétale et portative: prolégomènes à un corpus* (Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert, 1974), p. 34, fig. 9; Italo Furlan, *Le Icone bizantine a mosaico* (Milano: Edizioni Stendhal, 1979), p. 14.
31. See Anke Angelika Krickelberg-Pütz, "Die Mosaikone des Hl. Nikolaus in Aachen-Burtscheid," *Aachener Kunstblätter* 50 (1982), pp. 83–85, 103, 109, 132–33, fig. 48.

32. See Otto Demus, *Die byzantinischen Mosaikiken*, vol. 1, *Die grossformatigen Ikonen*, Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für Byzantinistik 5 (Vienna: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1991), pp. 56–57, figs. II, XII.
33. See Otto Demus, “Two Palaeologan Mosaic Icons in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 14 (1960), pp. 89–90.
34. See Jean Darrouzès, *Notitiae Episcopatum Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae. Texte critique, introduction et notes* (Paris: Institut français d’études byzantines, 1981), pp. 205–7, 248; Albert Failler, “La Déposition du patriarche Calliste Ier,” *Revue des études byzantines* 31 (1973), pp. 29, 105; Feridun Dirimtekin, “Eregli-Perinthus-Herakleia. Mygdonia va batsin daki liman kalintisi,” *Ayasofia Müsesi Yiligi* 7 (1967), pp. 1–35; Peter Grossmann, *Mittelalterliche Landskuppelkirchen und verwandte Typen in Oberägypten* (Glückstadt, Germany: J. J. Augustin, 1982), pp. 145–46, fig. 59.
35. See Feridun Dirimtekin, “Eregli-Perinthus-Herakleia. Mygdonia va batsin daki liman kalintisi,” *Ayasofia Müsesi Yiligi* 7 (1967), pp. 1–35; and Josef Strzygowski, “Die Kathedrale von Herakleia,” *Jahreshefte des österreichischen archäologischen Institutes in Wien, Beiblatt* (Baden bei Wien: R. M. Rohrer, 1898), p. 20. According to Strzygowski the iconostasis in which the icon was displayed dated to 1725.
36. See Paul A. Underwood, *The Kariye Djami*, vol. 2, *The Mosaics*, Bollingen Series 70 (New York: Bollingen Foundation, 1967), plates 21.2, 38, 40, 68, 89.
37. See *L’art byzantin—art européen* (Athens: 1964), p. 238, fig. 168.
38. Demus dates the icon to 1300. See Otto Demus, *Die byzantinischen Mosaikiken*, vol. 1, *Die grossformatigen Ikonen*, Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für Byzantinistik 5 (Vienna: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1991), pp. 15–18, pl. 1, fig. 1. For more information on this icon see Elka Bakalova, “Mozaichnata ikona Sveta Bogoroditsa Odigitria ot Natsionalnii arheologicheski muzei v Sofia,” *Problemi na izkustvoto* 3–4 (1992), pp. 54–62.
39. The icon, originally in the Church of the Theotokos in Sozopol, is now in the Ecclesiastical Museum of History and Archaeology, Inv. no. 140; it is exhibited in the National Art Gallery, Old Bulgarian Art Collection, The Crypt. It was first published by Ivan Goshev, who dated it to the eleventh century. See Ivan Goshev, “Edin srednovekoven barelef ot Sozopol. Prinos kum ikonografiata na drakonopobeditelite-konnitsi sv. Georgi i sv. Dimitur v vizantiiskot izkustvo,” *Godishnik na Sofiiskia Universitet, Bogoslovski Fakultet* 6 (1929), pp. 1–99. Krüstiü Miiatev dated the icon to between the fourteenth and fifteenth century. See Kurt Weitzmann, Manolis Chatzidakis, Krüstiü Miiatev, and Svetozar Radojčić, *Frühe Ikonen* (Vienna and Munich: Schroll, 1965); and Krüstiü Miiatev, “Ikonite v Bulgaria,” in *Ikonite ot Balkanite* (Sofia and Belgrade: 1966), p. 110. Vasil Panduski dates the relief to between the tenth and eleventh century, the frame with the floral ornaments to the fourteenth century, and the scenes to between the fifteenth and sixteenth century. See Vasil Panduski, *Pametnitsi na izkustvoto v Tsurkovnii istoriko-arkheologicheski muzei* (Sofia: Bulgarski khudozhnik, 1977), p. 14, figs. 1–2. T. Mark-Weiner dates the icon between the fourteenth and fifteenth century. See Tamily Mark-Weiner, “Narrative Cycles of the Life of St. George in Byzantine Art” (Ph.D. diss., New York University, Institute of Fine Arts, 1978), no. 85, p. 81, fig. LII; Georgi Gerov et al., *National Art Gallery. Old Bulgarian Art Collection. The Crypt. Guide* (Sofia: Saint Alexander Nevski Cathedral, 1999), p. 28.
40. The icon from Sozopol may be compared with the well-known relief Icon of Saint George, in the Byzantine Museum in Athens. See Reinhold Lange, *Die byzantinische Relieffikone* (Recklinghausen: A. Bongers, 1964), pp. 121–23, fig. 49; Kurt Weitzmann, Manolis Chatzidakis, Krüstiü Miiatev, and Svetozar Radojčić, *Frühe Ikonen* (Vienna and Munich: Schroll, 1965), pp. XXVI, LXXXIII, fig. 49; Panayotis L. Vokotopoulos [Vocotopoulos], *Hellenike Technē. Byzantines eikones* (Athens: Ekdoteke Athenon, 1995), p. 85, fig. 64.
41. The icon was found in the fifteenth-century Church of Saint Stephan (New Metropolitan Church) in Nesebŭr, but originally it might have belonged to the famous Monastery of the Theotokos Eleousa, which received its charter from John V Palaiologos in 1379. See Athanasios Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Analekta hierosolymitikes stachoulogias*, vol. 1 (Saint Petersburg: V. Kirsvaoum, 1891), pp. 417–68; Margarites Konstantinides, *He Mesemvria tou Euxeinou*, vol. 1 (Athens: 1945), p. 450; V. Giuzelev, “Ocherk vurkhu istoriata na grad Nesebŭr v perioda 1353–1453,” *Godishnik na Sofiiskia Universitet, Filosofsko-istoricheski Fakultet* 64 (1970), pp. 57–98. In the thirteenth century, the image of the Theotokos was painted over; the cover of the icon dates to the fourteenth century. See Krüstiü Miiatev, “Kum ikonografiata na Bogoroditsa-Umlenie,” *Izvestiia na Bulgarskia Arkheologicheski Institut* 3 (1925), p. 173, plates IV–V; André Grabar, *Les Revêtements en or et en argent des icônes byzantines du Moyen Âge*, Bibliothèque de l’Institut hellénique d’études byzantines et post-byzantines de Venise 7 (Venice: Institut hellénique d’études byzantines et post-byzantines de Venise, 1975), pp. 28–29. Almost all authors agree that the representation of Christ Pantokrator on the icon dates to the end of the thirteenth or the beginning of the fourteenth century. See Kostadinka G. K. Paskaleva, “Trois Icônes de Nessebar du XIIIe siècle,” *Byzantinobulgarica* 7 (1981), pp. 373–77; Atanas Bozhkov, *Bulgarian Icons* (Sofia: Bulgarski Khudozhnik, 1987), nos. 30, 31.
42. Miiatev first dated the icon to the fifteenth century and reported that it originally decorated the chapel (no longer extant) in Hreljo’s Tower. See Krüstiü Miiatev, “Sukrovishkata na Rilskaia manastir,” *Godishnik na Narodnii Muzei 1924–25* (Sofia: 1926), p. 319. Later, Miiatev changed his mind, suggesting a

- fourteenth-century date: See Kurt Weitzmann, Manolis Chatzidakis, Krüsti Miiatev, and Svetozar Radojčić, *Frühe Ikonen* (Vienna and Munich: Schroll, 1965) pp. LI, LV, XCII, fig. 108; Teofana Matakieva-Lilkova, *Icons in Bulgaria* (Sofia: Borina, 1994), p. 22, fig. 2.
43. See Liuben Prashkov, *Khreliovata kula* (Sofia: Bulgarski khudozhnik, 1973); Elka Bakalova, "Zur Interpretation des frühesten Zyklus der Vita des Hl. Ivan von Rila in der bildenden Kunst," in *Festschriften für Klaus Wessel zum 70. Geburtstag (in memoriam)* (Munich: Editio Maris, 1988), pp. 38–48; John Meyendorff, "Wisdom-Sophia: Contrasting Approaches to a Complex Theme," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 41 (1987), p. 34, figs. 3a, b.
 44. For the fresco of Saint John of Rila in the Zemen Monastery see Liliana Mavrodinova, *Zemenskata tzurkva* (Sofia: Bulgarski khudozhnik, 1980), p. 125, fig. 77.
 45. See Paul A. Underwood, *The Karie Djami*, vol. 3, *The Frescoes*. Bollingen Series 70 (New York: Bollingen Foundation, 1966), pp. 428–29, 432–35, 506–7. See also the Icon of the Twelve Apostles, in Moscow, illustrated in Viktor N. Lazarev, *Storia della pittura bizantina: Edizione italiana rielaborata e ampliata dall'autore* (Turin: Giulio Einaudi, 1967), p. 368, figs. 495, 496.
 46. On the Hreljo Tower chapel frescoes see Liuben Prashkov, "Edin stenopisen tsikul ot zhitieto na Ivan Rilski ot XIV vek," in *Turnovskata knizhovna shkola 1371–1971* (Sofia: Bulgarska Akademiia na Naukite, 1974), p. 439; Elka Bakalova, "Sur la Peinture bulgare de la seconde moitié du XIV^e siècle," in *Moravska skola i njeno doba-L'école de la Morava et son temps* (Belgrade: Filozofski fakultet-Odeljenje za istoriju umetnosti, 1972), pp. 70–72.
 47. See Todor Gerasimov, "Novootkrit nadpis vrkhu ikonata na Bogoroditsa Umilenie of Nessebur," *Izvestiia na Narodniiia Muzei v Burgas* 1 (1950), pp. 253–56, figs. XVII, XVIII. See André Grabar, *Les Revêtements en or et en argent des icônes byzantines du Moyen Âge*, Bibliothèque de l'Institut hellénique d'études byzantines et post-byzantines de Venise 7 (Venice: Institut hellénique d'études byzantines et post-byzantines de Venise, 1975), pp. 26–28, figs. 8–10, for Nancy Ševčenko's translations of the inscriptions on the cover of the icon into English, which read as follows: "During the rule of the most pious great Emperor John Alexander and his son, the most pious Emperor Michael Asan, I generously and lovingly put (or dedicated) the present adornment made of gold and silver to the present most venerable and divine icon of Theotokos" (on the left); and "In the year 6850 (1341/42), also, I the most beloved and affectionate (or true) uncle of the most exalted Emperor Alexander, restored the most venerable and divine temple of the most blessed lady of ours, Theotokos the Merciful" (on the right).
 48. First published by Elka Bakalova, "Sur la peinture bulgare de la seconde moitié du XIV^e siècle," in *Moravska skola i njeno doba-L'école de la Morava et son temps* (Belgrade: Filozofski fakultet-Odeljenje za istoriju umetnosti, 1972), pp. 73–74, who dates the icon to the middle of the fourteenth century—more precisely, sometime before 1366. For the iconography see Gerold Ivanovich Vzdornov, "Synaxis ton Archangelon," *Vizantiiskii vremennik* 32 (1971), pp. 157–84.
 49. See Vojislav J. Djurić, *Icônes de Yougoslavie* (Belgrade: Naučno delo, 1961), p. 103, note 31, pl. XLVI.
 50. After the icon was cleaned and later overpainting removed, it was published by Paskaleva, who dated it to the thirteenth century. See Kostadinka G. K. Paskaleva, "Trois Icônes de Nessebar du XIII^e siècle," *Byzantinobulgarica* 7 (1981), pp. 369–73, figs. 2–5.
 51. See Todor Gerasimov, "L'Icône bilatérale de Poganovo au Musée Archéologique de Sofia," *Cahiers archéologiques* 10 (1959), pp. 279–88.
 52. See André Grabar, "À Propos d'Une Icône byzantine au Musée de Sofia," *Cahiers archéologiques* 10 (1959), pp. 289–304; Andreas Xyngopoulos, "L'Icône bilatérale de Poganovo," *Cahiers archéologiques* 12 (1961), pp. 363–80; André Grabar, "Sur Les Sources des peintres byzantins des XIII^e et XIV^e siècles, Nouvelles recherches sur l'icône bilatérale de Poganovo," *Cahiers archéologiques* 12 (1961), pp. 363–80; Atanas Bozhkov, "Za suizheta na bilateralnata ikona ot Poganovskiiia manastir," *Izkustvo* 9 (1976), pp. 2–7; *idem*, *Bulgarian Icons* (Sofia: Bulgarski khudozhnik, 1987), plates 44, 45, 47; Kurt Weitzmann, *The Icon: Holy Images—Sixth to Fourteenth Century* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1978), pp. 132, 147.
 53. See Gordana Babić, "Sur l'Icône de Poganovo et la Vassilissa Hélène," in *L'Art de Thessalonique et des pays balkaniques et courants spirituels au XIV^e siècle* (Belgrade: Académie serbe des sciences et des arts, Institut des études balkaniques, 1987), pp. 57–67; Gojko Subotic, "L'Icône de la Vassilissa Hélène et les fondateurs du monastère de Poganovo," *Saobstenja* 25 (1993), pp. 25–38; Panayotis L. Vokotopoulos [Vocotopoulos], *Hellenike Téchne. Byzantines eikones* (Athens: Ekdotike Athenon, 1995), pp. 218–19, figs. 125, 126.
 54. For additional information see Elka Bakalova, *Bachkovskata Kostnitsa* (Sofia: Bulgarski khudozhnik, 1977), pp. 67–72.
 55. On the different epithets for the Virgin see André Grabar, "Remarques sur l'iconographie byzantine de la Vierge," *Cahiers archéologiques* 26 (1977), pp. 169–78. For a fresco of the Virgin with the epithet Kataphyge see Lawrence J. Majewski, "The Conservation of a Byzantine Fresco Discovered at Etymez, Istanbul," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 14 (1960), pp. 219–22. On the epithet Kataphyge see Elka Bakalova, "Aspekti na suotmoshenieto 'slovesen tekst-izobrazhenie' v bulgarskoto srednovekovie (pesennopoetichna obraznost-vizualni suotmosheniia)," *Problemi na izkustvoto* 1 (1991), pp. 3–20.
 56. See Edmond Voordeckers, "L'Interprétation liturgique de quelques icônes byzantines," *Byzantion* 53 (1983), pp. 61–62.

Between Byzantium and Rome: Manuscripts from Southern Italy

This paper considers a few of the most significant developments in Greek manuscript production in southern Italy, from the age of Justinian in the sixth century to the Norman conquest in the eleventh century, without dwelling extensively on the historical and political events that troubled southern Italy and Sicily, then part of the vast Byzantine Empire.¹ At the end of the sixth century, the Lombards invaded and conquered the Byzantine territories of North and Central Italy. Rome, although still a Byzantine duchy with a high concentration of peoples and cultures from the eastern regions of the empire, eluded Byzantium's control; instead, the city progressively came under the influence of the Frankish kingdom, the rising power in the West. Only the islands of Sicily and Sardinia, some territories in the southern region of the peninsula (Calabria and Apulia), and a few centers scattered along the Tyrrhenian coast (Gaeta and Naples) remained within the Byzantine Empire. During this period, the power of local officials in the Italian Byzantine regions increased enormously, fostering the growing independence of these regions from Constantinople. In the ninth century, the arrival of the Arabs in Sicily brought even greater losses to Byzantium; by 965, Rometta, the last Byzantine stronghold in Sicily, fell to Muslim forces. Finally, in

1071, the Normans, under the leadership of Robert Guiscard (about 1015–July 17, 1085), captured Bari, the last remaining Byzantine stronghold in Italy.

In southern Italy, Byzantine rule engendered a social and cultural structure that comprised bureaucratic institutions as well as bishoprics, churches, and monasteries, within which Greek books imported from the East or produced locally circulated freely. The so-called Rossano Gospels (Rossano, Museo Arcivescovile), a manuscript written on purple parchment and containing the texts of the Gospels of Matthew and of Mark, undoubtedly was produced in the late sixth century in the eastern provinces of the Byzantine Empire; it probably arrived in Calabria either in the seventh century, with immigrants fleeing the Arab invasion of Egypt, Syria, and Palestine, or in the eighth or the ninth century, with the Iconophiles seeking refuge from the Iconoclastic repression in Rome, Calabria, and Sicily.² Although the extensive iconographic cycle of the Rossano Gospels makes it a pillar of Late Antique book illumination, it does not appear to have influenced manuscripts produced in southern Italy, possibly because it was not well known or because its high artistic quality made it difficult to copy. In addition to the Rossano Gospels, other Late Antique Greek manuscripts of Eastern origin certainly were imported to Byzantine Italy, but they are difficult to identify, although it is possible that they survived intact, or that their parchments were reused as palimpsests. These manuscripts, too, may have arrived in southern Italy with Eastern immigrants between the seventh and the ninth century.

There are many questions concerning local book production in southern Italy. For example, where were the centers of book production located during the centuries

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under discussion? What did this book production consist of? When did it first begin? What constitutes its earliest evidence? Which were its first models? What were its features? What role did book production assume in the cultural dialogue between the Greek East and the Latin West? More than forty years have passed since 1955, when Robert Devreesse published the first survey of Greek manuscripts in southern Italy. Since then numerous studies on the subject have appeared and many manuscripts of unknown provenance have been attributed to southern Italy, while others, which had been ascribed to the region on uncertain grounds, have been reattributed to other areas.³ In addition to Rome, manuscripts were produced in Calabria and also—after the dispersal of Greek communities northward and eastward from Sicily in the aftermath of the Arab conquest—in Lucania, Campania, southern Latium as far as Grottaferrata, and Apulia. Despite the lack of explicit evidence, it is possible that a limited number of Greek manuscripts continued to be produced in Arab-ruled Sicily, particularly in the eastern part of the island. Clearly, the production of Greek manuscripts in Italy occurred in an area far wider than that directly under Byzantium's control.

The statistical data compiled by Paul Canart form the basis of our knowledge regarding the number of Greek manuscripts copied in Italy. For the tenth and eleventh centuries Canart lists a total of 416 manuscripts, among them 46 liturgical codices, 83 biblical and 81 hagiographical texts, 173 patristic manuscripts, and 33 works on other subjects.⁴ Although further studies have resulted in slight adjustments to Canart's data, and while some of the codices should be dated to the first decades of Norman rule, it is evident that during the tenth and eleventh centuries the Greeks in southern Italy produced a significant number of manuscripts, the majority of which were dedicated to theological subjects.⁵ Even though it is not always possible to establish

the provenance of these manuscripts, by far the greatest number of them can be associated with Calabria.

It appears that the production of Greek manuscripts in ancient and Late Antique Italy practically came to a halt in the sixth century, even if codices of this period, or their features, seem to have influenced manuscripts of later centuries. Medieval Greek manuscripts with a Roman or South Italian origin belong to a new tradition of book production, calligraphy, and decoration, which, at least in its early stages, is associated with eastern Greek immigrant scribes, who received their training in a variety of different locations. In time, these locally produced Greek codices developed characteristic calligraphic and decorative features, which, to a lesser or greater degree, betray the influence of the manuscript traditions of the Latin West. Recently, it has been suggested that the decorated initial, typical of the ornamentation of Western manuscripts, was introduced into the adornment of books produced in Constantinople and in Byzantium's eastern provinces through Greek codices copied in Italy.⁶ However, the identification of the origin of decorative motifs is an extremely complex problem and requires the consideration of numerous factors such as the fashion for Arabic ornamentation. It is futile to search for a single source of inspiration for the decorative vocabulary of South Italian Greek manuscripts: In some instances, a variety of mostly eccentric eastern Greek works appear to have served as models; in other cases, references to Latin and/or Arabic ornamental patterns prevail; and in still other examples the artistic language seems to have been formulated locally. Manuscripts belonging to the last category can be subdivided according to date and provenance. An example in The Pierpont Morgan Library in New York (M. 397) exhibits a rich fusion of Byzantine, Beneventan, and Arabic characteristics, epitomizing the complexity of artistic language of the Greek manuscripts of southern Italy (fig. 1). This manuscript, which dates to the beginning

of the eleventh century and contains the illustrated text of the fables of Bidpai and the *Life of Aesop*, as well as other unillustrated texts such as the *Physiologos*, the fables of Babrios, and the fables of Aesop, is the work of four scribes: The heterogeneous style of the script clearly reveals differences in their calligraphic training.⁷

Although statistics for the period before the tenth century are not available because data regarding the oldest South Italian Greek manuscripts are scarce and problematic, it can be assumed that, from the seventh century, Greek codices were copied in Byzantine Italy, probably for the most part in Sicily, where Greek culture was widespread until the Arab conquest.⁸ Some of the seventh- and eighth-century examples written in majuscule contain definitive proof of their South Italian origin—such as an eighth-century euchologion (prayer book used by the principal liturgical ministers) (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Barb. gr. 336; see fig. 2) and ninth-century manuscripts containing patristic texts (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 2059, 2066; Washington, D.C., Library of Congress 60). Among dated manuscripts, an example in the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana (Vat. gr. 1666), written in majuscule and containing Pope Zachary's Greek translation of the *Dialogi* of Gregory the Great, is surely of Western origin; it dates to the year 800, and appears to have been written and decorated in Rome, as opposed to southern Italy.

It is well known that minuscule script was first used in Byzantine book production in the ninth century and became widespread thereafter. It is difficult, however, to establish when minuscule script first appeared in southern Italy, but this may have occurred simultaneously with its adoption in the eastern Byzantine provinces. Immigrants arriving in Italy mostly from Egypt, Syria, and Palestine brought with them the new script, which still exhibited irregular and cursive features.⁹ It is noteworthy that the most provincial scripts of the Byzantine

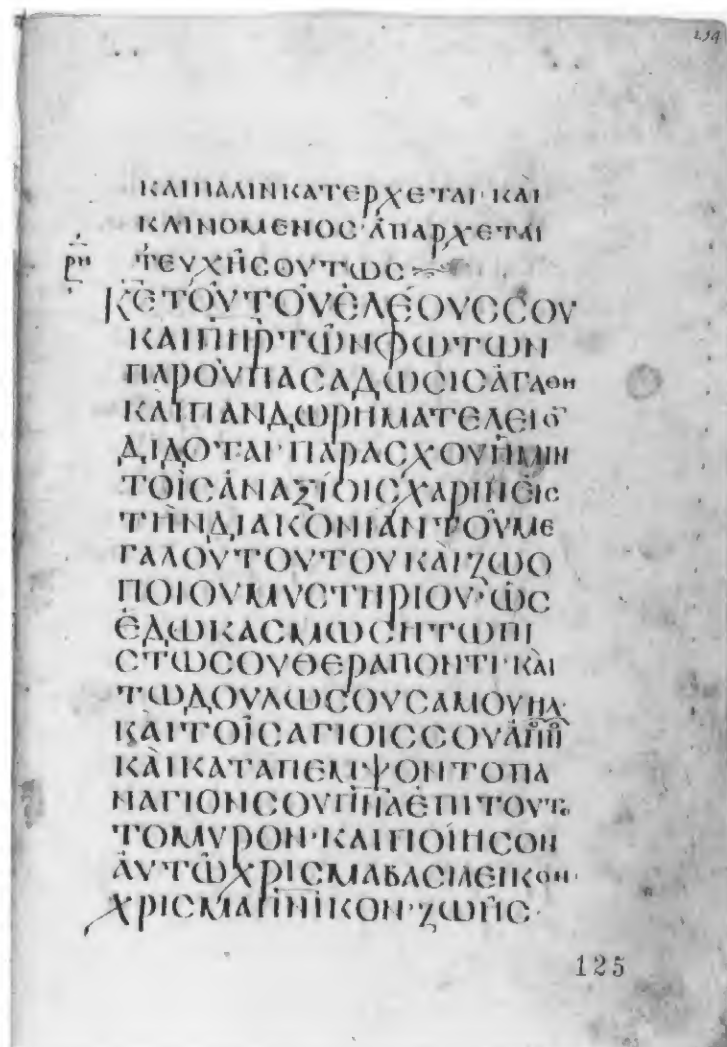


Figure 2. Leaf from a euchologion. South Italian, 8th century. Tempera on vellum: 18.9 x 13 cm. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City (Barb. gr. 336, fol. 125r)

world seem to have survived mainly in southern Italy because, until the eleventh century, Constantinopolitan models largely were unknown.

The first dated South Italian manuscripts written in minuscule postdate examples from Byzantium. The southern Italian origin

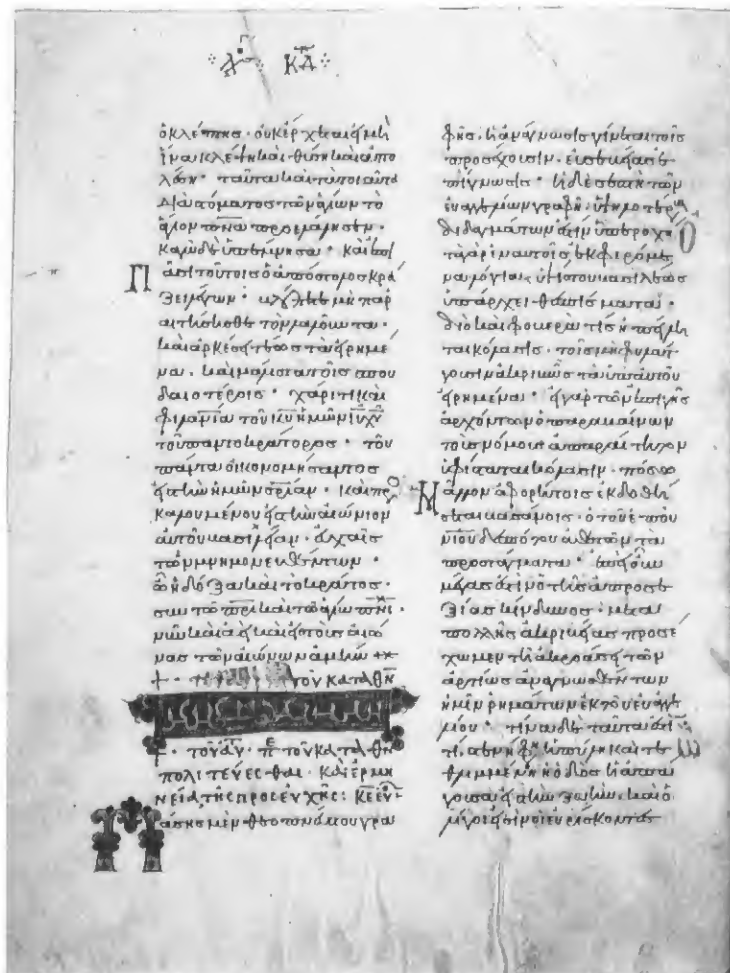


Figure 3. Manuscript page, displaying ornamental use of Kufic characters. South Italian, early 11th century. Tempera on vellum: 31.5 x 24.5 cm. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City (Vat. gr. 2035, fol. 20v)

of a hagiographical collection now in Paris (Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Ms. gr. 1470, 1476), which was subscribed by a certain Anastasios in 890, although probable, remains debated.¹⁰ A colophon, however, makes the southern Italian provenance of a manuscript of the Liturgical Homilies of Saint Gregory of Nazianzos (Patmos, The

Holy Monastery of Saint John the Theologian, gr. 33) indisputable. This manuscript, copied in Reggio in 941, is richly decorated and written in a script called “Anastasios,” after the scribe of the above-mentioned hagiographical collection in Paris. This script and similar characteristic decorative patterns recur in a number of manuscripts from the ninth and tenth centuries. Whether all these codices were copied in southern Italy is an issue that requires further study, even though a great deal already has been written on the subject.

A large number of Greek manuscripts from the tenth and eleventh centuries have been attributed to southern Italy (416, according to Canart) on the basis either of scribal colophons (for example, Patmos, gr. 33) or calligraphic, codicological, decorative, textual, and linguistic evidence. The Patmos manuscript cited above, a large codex written and lavishly decorated by the monk Nicholas and his spiritual son Daniel, opens with a series of nine title pages with floral and zoomorphic motifs framing polychrome geometric interlacing bands of various shapes. These title pages present and consolidate the motifs executed in gold and such vivid colors as red, green, yellow, blue, and violet, which recur throughout the manuscript.¹¹ This type of ornamentation is typical of South Italian Greek manuscripts of the tenth and eleventh centuries. The lavishness of the Patmos manuscript, the most richly decorated, may be associated with the prestigious position of Reggio, the city where it was produced. Reggio was then the metropolitan center of the see of Calabria and the residence of the *strategos* (the highest civil and military official of the Byzantine Empire in southern Italy) of Sicily (already under Arab rule) and Calabria. Therefore, it is probable that high-quality books were commissioned and produced in this city. Approximately one hundred years later, in 1037, another resident of Reggio, Nicholas, the city’s bishop, commissioned a splendid manuscript of the Acts and Epistles of the New Testament (Vatican City,

Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 1650) from the scribe Theodore Sikeliotes.

South Italian Greek manuscript production outside of Reggio does not conform to the same high standards. The vast majority of Greek manuscripts from Calabria, which date mostly to the late tenth and the beginning of the eleventh century, have a significantly different, rougher character. Their parchment is coarse, thick, and flawed; the script is careless; the colors of the decoration (friezes, motifs, and initials) are garish; and, occasionally, the painting technique is poor and clumsy. Examples of such manuscripts include a small, unpretentious lectionary with some homilies copied by a priest named Peter in 963–64 in Africo, a town in the diocese of Bova (Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Laur. 9.15); a qualitatively mediocre codex of liturgical texts copied by the priest Symeon in 982 in Malvito, in the diocese of San Marco Argentano (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. gr. 75); a collection of the works of Ephrem the Syrian (about 306–June 9, 373) copied in 1020 in the Monastery of San Sosti, also in the diocese of San Marco Argentano, by a clerk named Mark, whose hand is more accurate and competent in comparison with that of others (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 2030); and a *tetraevangelion* (Gospel book) copied in 1052 in Taverna, Calabria, by Constantine the protopapas (head priest), who was educated elsewhere, possibly in Apulia (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 2002).

Other manuscripts are worth considering, either because they are particularly interesting or because they exemplify specific features of Greek book production in southern Italy. Arabic influences can be recognized in an early-eleventh-century example (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 2035), which contains works by Saint John Chrysostom (fig. 3). In this manuscript, Kufic characters have been inserted into the ornamental bands and distorted for decorative purposes.¹² Another manuscript (Vatican



Figure 4. Manuscript page, showing Islamic influences. South Italian, 1029–30. Tempera on vellum: 20 x 17.2 cm. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City (Chis. R. IV 18, fol. 48r)

City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Chis. R. IV 18), a collection of writings by Saint John of Damascus, produced before 1029–30, exhibits even stronger Islamic influences (fig. 4);¹³ its ornamentation is similar to that of Arabic manuscripts of the Koran,¹⁴ and a large section (folios 43r–238v) is written in the so-called *de pique* script (a name derived from the type of ligature joining the letters epsilon and rho), which was widely

diffused and certainly used in Calabria and possibly in the eastern part of Sicily during the period of Arab rule.¹⁵

A large number of manuscripts can be connected with the monastic movement that developed around Saint Neilos of Rossano (about 910–September 26, 1004) during the last decades of the tenth century and the beginning of the eleventh. Arab incursions and economic instability encouraged Saint Neilos and his monks to move from his native Calabria to Campania. Later they moved again, to the central regions of Langobardia Minor, and, in 1004, traveling even further north, Saint Neilos founded the Monastery of Santa Maria di Grottaferrata, in Latium, near Rome. Saint Neilos was an accomplished scribe responsible for several of the manuscripts now in the library in Grottaferrata (Crypt. B.α.XIX, B.α.XX, and B.β.I.). Many of his monks were also competent scribes,¹⁶ and the codices they produced during their long journey across Calabria, Campania, and Latium can be identified. A number of the surviving manuscripts can be attributed to Kyriakos “the Wretched,” including an evangelion (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 2138) produced in 991 in Capua (fig. 5); the *Questiones et responsiones* of Anastasios of Sinai (d. after 700) (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 2020.II) copied in 993 at the so-called Fillino Monastery near Gaeta; a collection of the works of Maximos the Confessor (580–August 3, 662) (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 2020. I) possibly copied in 994 at an undetermined location; and a manuscript (Monte Cassino, Archivio dell’Abbazia 432) containing the homilies of Saint Gregory of Nazianzos (329/30–about 390) and attributed to Kyriakos on the basis of the script. In 985, Paul, another disciple of Neilos, possibly working in the Monastery of San Michele di Valleducio, a *metochion* (dependency) of Monte Cassino, produced a manuscript containing a collection of letters by Isidore of Pelousion (about 365–after 433) (Biblioteca,

Grottaferrata, Crypt. B.α.I.). At the same time, the scribe Arsenios copied a series of ascetic, homiletic, and doctrinal manuscripts, including one that bears his colophon (Monte Cassino, Archivio dell’Abbazia 431); two now at the Vatican (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. Ottob. gr. 250, 251); and one now in Madrid (Biblioteca Nacional, 4585). These are only a representative few of the many codices by the so-called school of Saint Neilos, which operated between Campania and southern Latium. While the calligraphic training of the scribes of the “school of Saint Neilos” was varied, by working in a common cultural context they developed a script with some uniform features, including letters that were small and round; heavy strokes; compressed spacing; and an overall fluidity.

It is mainly the manuscripts copied in Langobardia Minor in the context of the “school of Saint Neilos” that display the influence of contemporary Latin manuscripts. In contrast to Byzantine Calabria, where Latin books did not circulate and where exposure to Latin culture was minimal, in Langobardia Minor numerous Benedictine monasteries (such as Monte Cassino) served as centers of Cassinese and Beneventan book production, which was distinguished by specific codicological, calligraphic, and ornamental features. The proximity of Greek and Latin centers of manuscript production in Langobardia Minor resulted in the appropriation of certain Latin elements in the Greek manuscripts. Thus, some Greek manuscripts copied in Latium and Campania, like their Latin counterparts, contain quires beginning with sheets that have their hair side facing upward, while others show a preference for ruling systems and types common in Latin book production and use a yellow ochre and green wash to highlight the lines of script. Finally, several decorative motifs associated with Latin manuscripts appear in Greek codices, such as the distorted dog-like figures typical of Cassinese book ornamentation.

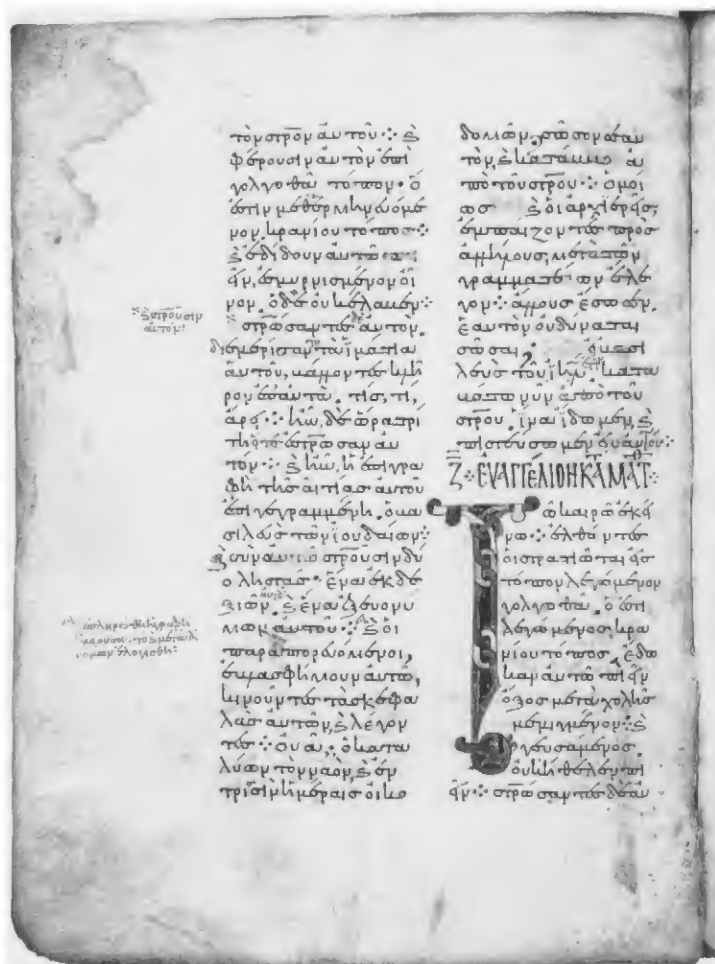


Figure 5. Attributed to Kyriakos “the Wretched.” Leaf from an evangelion. South Italian (Capua), 991. Tempera on vellum: 25.5 x 18.3 cm. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City (Vat. gr. 2138, fol. 31v)

The production of other Greek manuscripts was localized further east, in Byzantine Apulia. Here, too, at least in Terra di Bari, Latin Cassinese manuscripts exerted a strong influence. Nevertheless, it is difficult to single out codices produced under Byzantine rule in Terra di Bari, Taranto, or Salento. The decoration of the initials in a manuscript in Chicago (Joseph Regenstein Library, Cod. 947), which is similar to that seen in other works from Bari, suggests that it was written

and decorated in the region around Bari. The manuscript is an evangelion, commissioned by Basilios *proximos*, a Byzantine civil official, and, therefore, can be dated to the period before the Norman Conquest of 1071.¹⁷ Also, the group of manuscripts copied by the scribe Leo “the Sinner,” who was active in the first half of the eleventh century, seems to come from Apulia,¹⁸ although it is impossible to assign a more precise provenance for these manuscripts; they include Gospels (Athens,



Figure 6. Liturgical Roll. Byzantine (Constantinople), second quarter of the 12th century. Tempera and gold on vellum: 583.1 x 21.5 cm. The Holy Monastery of Saint John the Theologian, Patmos (Cod. 707 [Roll 1])

Ethnike Bibliothek 74; Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Theol. Gr. 188; Biblioteca Grottaferrata, Crypt. A.α.III), the Acts and Epistles adapted to liturgical use (Biblioteca Grottaferrata, Crypt. A.β.III, and Oxford, Lincoln College, gr. 82), and a fragment with sections of the Gospels of Matthew and of Mark (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 1287). Similarities exist between the decoration of these codices and that of other manuscripts of certain Apulian origin (for example, Bari, Archivio della Cattedrale, Exultet 1). Furthermore, this group of manuscripts exhibits a script quite different from the one used in Calabria and in Campania, but which seems to be related, instead, to the “minuscule bouletée” first developed in Constantinople, where it also was widely used. Constantine, the scribe who worked in Taverna, a town in Calabria, employed a similar type of script (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 2002), and, therefore, it can be assumed that he received his calligraphic training somewhere in Apulia. Finally, a few mid-eleventh-century liturgical books have been ascribed to the region around Taranto.¹⁹

The coexistence of so many different cultures in southern Italy makes it difficult to distinguish the various influences and models reflected in the codices produced there. It seems that Arabic and Latin elements were incorporated into an already existent provincial Byzantine culture dating back, in some cases, to Late Antiquity. Furthermore, similar features can be recognized in the decorative apparatus of Greek manuscripts produced in southern Italy, Palestine, Egypt (especially in Sinai),²⁰ Bithynia,²¹ and the Near East. A common artistic vocabulary governed the decoration and possibly the writing and realization of books produced in the eastern and western provinces of Byzantium. Until the eleventh century, however, the artistic achievements of the Byzantine capital are barely discernible in Greek codices from southern Italy.

According to André Grabar, Greek manuscript production in Italy developed local or

“regional” traditions because centers of production were far removed from Byzantium and in close proximity to other cultures, but these traditions were confined to culturally modest Greek-speaking communities, where scribes copied books for the local population or for personal use.²² Until the late eleventh century, with few exceptions, the books produced were second rate in quality and quite unrefined in style, and did not exert any influence on contemporary Latin manuscripts. This was especially true of lavish Latin codices, which, however, do display definite signs of eastern Greek and, occasionally, Constantinopolitan influence.²³ All evidence appears to indicate that Byzantine officials in southern Italy commissioned codices from workshops in Byzantium, and that merchants, travelers, legates, and church officials brought these Byzantine manuscripts to southern Italy from the East. The high-quality Latin manuscripts commissioned by the bishoprics of the Western Church and the Benedictine abbeys, which at that time enjoyed great prestige and wealth, relied on imported models for inspiration. As in the rest of Western Europe, for numerous reasons and by various means, manuscripts and other objects from the Byzantine East were brought or imported to southern Italy, and, in varying degrees, these Byzantine works of art influenced the production of Latin manuscripts.²⁴

Not all Byzantine works that came to the West are preserved.²⁵ This is true for eastern Byzantine liturgical rolls that inspired the production of Latin liturgical *rotuli* in southern Italy.²⁶ Even though liturgical rolls were part of the ecclesiastical tradition of the Latin West,²⁷ the use of *rotuli* in southern Italy during solemn ceremonies, their devotional status, and their customary association with the officiating deacon can be explained only through parallels with Eastern practices.²⁸ Probably beginning in the late tenth century, Byzantine *rotuli* were imported to southern Italy and it was these Byzantine models that may have led to the inclusion



Figure 7. Exultet Roll, with illustrations arranged in strips. South Italian (Benevento), 983–87. Tempera and brown ink on vellum: 33.5 x 27.2 cm. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City (Ms. Vat. lat. 9820)

of illustrations in South Italian *rotuli*. The homiliary (Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale Vittorio Emanuele III, VI.B.2) ascribed by Hans Belting to a scriptorium in Bari²⁹ attests to the circulation of Byzantine models in southern Italy beginning in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Although the manuscript was produced in a Benedictine cultural context, it displays certain iconographic and stylistic qualities that are clearly Byzantine in



Figure 8. The Baptism of Christ. Illumination from an evangelion. South Italian (Apulia), 12th–13th century. Tempera on vellum: 29.2 x 20 cm. Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Milan (Ms. D. 67 sup, fol. 123v)

origin. While Greek liturgical rolls also were produced locally, their poor quality makes them unlikely sources for the exceptional Latin Exultet Rolls commissioned mostly by important Church dignitaries (bishops and archbishops) for solemn ceremonies in their cathedrals. The Byzantine examples that were copied may have been heterogeneous in origin: Some may have come from eastern Greece and, on occasion, from Constantinople itself; however, unlike the works produced by the stagnant local Greek culture of southern Italy, these manuscripts always reflected current Byzantine artistic achievements. Paralleling opulent Byzantine liturgical rolls (such as Patmos, The Holy Monastery of Saint John the Theologian, Cod. 707 [Roll 1]; see fig. 6),³⁰ a number of the most splendid South Italian Exultet Rolls display

illustrations arranged in strips (as, for example, Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 9820, copied at Benevento between 983 and 987 [fig. 7]; Bari, Archivio della Cattedrale, Exultet 1, dated to the first decades of the eleventh century; or Troia, Archivio della Cattedrale, Exultet 3, 12th century).³¹ The influence of Byzantine models also can be recognized in other decorative features of these Exultet Rolls: In the composition of scenes, such as that of the Anastasis (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 9820);³² in the ornament, painterly borders, medallions with saints, and Greek inscriptions (Bari, Archivio della Cattedrale, Exultet 1), and in the associated benedictional,³³ as well as in the elongated and elegant figures (Troia, Archivio della Cattedrale, Exultet 3).³⁴ On the other hand, the incorporation of a complete

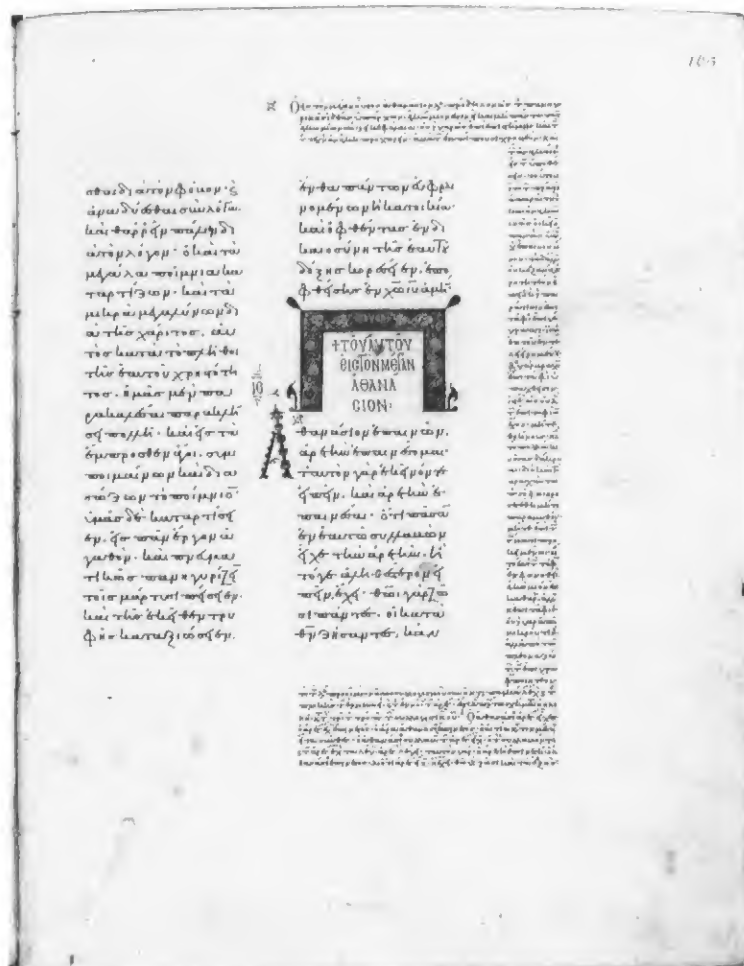


Figure 9. Leaf from the Liturgical Homilies of Saint Gregory of Nazianzos. Byzantine (Constantinople), 11th century. Tempera on vellum: 39.3 x 30 cm. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City (Vat. gr. 1653, fol. 163r)

pictorial cycle and the disposition of scenes and figures upside down with respect to the text—which allowed the congregation to view the images right-side up when the Exultet Roll was unfurled on the ambo during the Easter vigil—are among the original features in the decoration of these illuminated liturgical rolls.

The example in Troia (Archivio della Cattedrale, Exultet 3) introduced the subject of “Byzance après Byzance” to southern

Italy, channeling the influence of Byzantium, presumably through Monte Cassino’s dependencies, to remote locations. In the late eleventh century, under Abbot Desiderius (r. 1058–87), Monte Cassino, which interacted politically both with the pope and with the Normans, became one of the centers that disseminated Byzantine influence throughout southern Italy. The presence of Greek artisans at Monte Cassino, as well as the importation of objects from Constantinople, contributed



Figure 10. Theophilos Orders Leo V's Assassins Punished and Theophilos Arrives at the Blachernai Church. Illumination from the Madrid Chronicle of John Skylitzes. South Italian, about 1130s–40s. Tempera on vellum: 35.5 x 27 cm. Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid (Vitr. 26–2, fol. 43r)

to the significance of this abbey as a cultural intermediary.³⁵ Byzantine influence is especially recognizable in such examples of Cassinese book production as Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Barb. lat. 592; London, The British Library, Add. Ms. 30337;³⁶ in the extensive pictorial cycle accompanying the lections for the feasts of Saints Benedict, Maurus, and Scholastica in Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 1202;³⁷ and in the pen drawings in the homiliaries in Monte Cassino (Archivio dell'Abbazia, 98, 99), dated to 1072—the year when the new basilica in Desiderius's abbey was consecrated—which show “la rarefatta eleganza dell'arte aulica costantinopolitana.”³⁸

There was certainly a difference between the Byzantine models available in Bari and those circulating in Monte Cassino. According to Hans Belting, “At Bari, the Latin copyists and their patron had no need to import the actual Greek models, since Greek patronage was responsible for this import,” whereas “at Monte Cassino, the case was different. Here, we must assume a deliberate wish to acquire such a model, and this attitude on the part of the patron is one of the new features of the Desiderian era.”³⁹ In both centers, however, the results were the same: Patrons (the bishops of Bari or the abbots of Monte Cassino) who commissioned Latin books looked to Greek models copied in the East. Although numerous Greek communities existed in the vicinity of Monte Cassino, where many Greek books were copied and decorated (by, for example, the so-called school of Saint Neilos), contemporary local Greek culture did not influence the production of Latin books. The objects produced and the codices illustrated during the abbacy of Desiderius show pure Byzantine iconographic and stylistic characteristics.

Under Norman rule, Greek book production improved in quality and became more widespread. According to Canart's statistics, 401 Greek manuscripts date to the twelfth century, nearly equal in number to such manuscripts produced in the previous

two centuries.⁴⁰ Occasionally, eleventh- and twelfth-century Greek codices, like their Latin counterparts, provide evidence of direct Byzantine—usually Constantinopolitan— influence. A number of manuscripts from Salerno are extremely significant in this respect, including an unpretentious evangelion (Saint Petersburg, Russian National Library, gr. 71) that dates to about 1019–20, poorly written and decorated by a hand of the “school of Saint Neilos” active in Langobardia Minor and in the princedom of Salerno,⁴¹ and a roll with the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Borg. gr. 27), copied sometime between 1085 and 1111 when Salerno was under Norman rule. The latter manuscript exhibits exquisite workmanship and is composed of individual parchment folios tinted in a combination of purple, turquoise, and scarlet colors; among its other features are the use of silver and, occasionally, gold ink; pure Constantinopolitan “perlschrift”; and decorative initials, which employ gold and silver and intermingle Byzantine and Beneventan features.⁴² This splendid liturgical roll was commissioned by Argyros and Semnes, clearly two Greeks of high social status. Purple- or turquoise-tinted parchment and a kind of “perlschrift” also characterize two contemporary twelfth-century manuscripts: a copy of the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom and one containing the so-called Twelve Feasts (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 170 and Ottob. gr. 326, respectively). These manuscripts were either imported from Constantinople and used as models for books (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Borg. gr. 27) or were produced in southern Italy under the direct influence of Constantinopolitan archetypes.⁴³

While Byzantine influences appear in manuscripts from Salerno, they are even more pronounced in works from Calabria and Sicily. In Apulia, the first manuscripts that can be ascribed to the Salento or the Terra d'Otranto regions, where Greek was spoken

and where Greek culture and the Orthodox faith dominated, date to the period of Norman rule. Here, however, the cultural awakening occurred later, in the twelfth and the thirteenth century, during Swabian rule. At this time, several manuscripts were produced, including an evangelion now in Milan (Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Ms. D.67 sup.) (fig. 8). The calligraphy, illustrations, and decoration of the initials, typical of Otranto, justify the attribution of this manuscript to Apulia.⁴⁴ Its style of illustration, like that of contemporary wall painting in Salento, displays Late Komnenian provincial rather than Constantinopolitan features.⁴⁵

Why is it that in little more than a century there were so many changes in the patronage, quantity, models, and—at least in Calabria and in Sicily—quality of Greek books produced in southern Italy? After the Conquest, the Normans reinforced Greek social and institutional structures, taking advantage of their internal stability. There was an increase in the number of Greek monasteries, including the *basilikai monai* (royal monastic foundations), such as Santa Maria del Patir near Rossano and San Salvatore di Messina, among others. These institutions were rich in patrimonial wealth, and were important centers of culture and book production. Furthermore, the Normans often chose their officials from among the prominent old Greek families, whose political ties with Byzantium had become dissolved.⁴⁶ Greek laymen as well as ecclesiastics in southern Italy felt the need to reestablish meaningful cultural bonds with the fatherland. For example, Bartholomew of Simeri (d. 1130), the *hegoumenos* (superior of a monastery) of Santa Maria del Patir, traveled to Byzantium in search of sacred ornaments and books for his monastery. In Constantinople, he visited the emperor Alexios I Komnenos (r. 1081–1118) and the empress Irene Doukaina (r. 1081–1118) and received as gifts sacred vestments, icons, and books, which he brought back to Calabria.⁴⁷ Among the Constantinopolitan manuscripts written

in “perlschrift,” which influenced the writing and decoration of books produced at Santa Maria del Patir, were the Liturgical Homilies of Saint Gregory of Nazianzos (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 1653) (fig. 9) and the immense Menologion “per annum,” eight volumes of which survive (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 1995, 2037–2040, 2043–2045).⁴⁸

Diplomatic ties between Byzantium and southern Italy were maintained during Norman as well as Swabian rule. To the Norman court, Byzantium represented the height of civilization and power. Therefore, the Normans emulated Byzantine ceremony, documentary practices, costumes, monumental and decorative arts, and, of course, manuscript production.

Greeks continued to play an important social and economic role in southern Italy, where a complex dialogue with Byzantium was maintained. The Madrid Chronicle of John Skylitzes (Biblioteca Nacional, Vit. 26–2) (fig. 10), the most important Greek manuscript produced in southern Italy, dates to the 1130s or 1140s, and contains the history of the Byzantine Empire from 811 to 1057, written by Skylitzes, and an anonymous account of events from 1057 to 1079.⁴⁹ While it is clear that the Madrid manuscript must have been created not long after the arrival of a Byzantine prototype in southern Italy, exactly where, why, and for whom it was made remain problematic. The extent of the iconographic apparatus (574 illustrations), the different pictorial styles (Byzantine, Western, Arabic), the difficulty of locating a model of sufficient quality in Byzantium itself—if one were not connected with a courtly patron—as well as the enormity of the funds necessary to make a work of such exceptional quality, strongly suggest that a high-ranking member of the Norman court, possibly a descendant of a Greek of noble birth, commissioned the Madrid Chronicle of John Skylitzes, perhaps to underscore the historical continuity between Byzantium and Norman Sicily, and to legitimize Norman

rule. Such functionaries—as, for example, Admiral George of Antioch, the patron of Santa Maria dell’Ammiraglio, the “Martorana,” in Palermo—possessed considerable wealth.⁵⁰ The manuscript might have been produced in a workshop in Palermo that employed artists and scribes from various places, in the Monastery of San Salvatore di Messina, elsewhere in Sicily, or even in an atelier in Calabria. Regardless of where the Madrid Chronicle of John Skylitzes originated, it tells the story of the Byzantine Empire and its protagonists in magnificent style. This South Italian manuscript captured the transient “glory of Byzantium,” and recorded the power of an empire that had become only an echo of its past.

1. For the history of Byzantine southern Italy see Vera von Falkenhausen, *Untersuchungen über die byzantinische Herrschaft in Süditalien vom 9. bis ins 11. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1967), pp. 3–102.
2. For the most recent publication on this manuscript see William Loerke, “The Rossano Gospels: The Miniatures,” in *Codex Purpureus Rossanensis. Commentarium*, eds. Guglielmo Cavallo, Jean Gribomont, and William Loerke (Rome and Graz: Salerno Editrice and Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1987), pp. 109–71.
3. Enrica Follieri has reviewed the most relevant recent studies on this subject; see Enrica Follieri, “Le Scritture librerie nell’Italia bizantina,” in *Libri e documenti d’Italia: dai Longobardi alla rinascita delle città*, ed. Cesare Scalon (Udine: Arti Grafiche Friulane, 1996), pp. 61–85.
4. See Paul Canart, “Le Livre grec en Italie méridionale sous les règnes normand et souabe: aspects matériels et sociaux,” *Scrittura e civiltà* 2 (1978), p. 161.
5. Although not extremely numerous, South Italian manuscripts with profane content do exist. See Jean Irigoin, “L’Italie méridionale et la tradition des textes antiques,” *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 18 (1969), pp. 37–55.
6. See Leslie Brubaker, “The Introduction of Painted Initials in Byzantium,” *Scriptorium* 45 (1991), pp. 22–46.
7. For important information on the manuscript see Mirtilla Avery, “Miniatures of the Fables of Bidpai and of the Life of Aesop in The Pierpont Morgan Library,” *The Art Bulletin* 23 (1941), pp. 103–16. The author ascribes the codex to the late tenth century. New research could help establish the specific provenance of this South Italian manuscript.

8. See Vera von Falkenhausen, “Il Monachesimo greco in Sicilia,” in *La Sicilia rupestre nel contesto delle civiltà mediterranee*, ed. Cosimo Damiano Fonseca (Galatina: Congedo, 1986), pp. 143–59.
9. See Carlo Maria Mazzucchi, “Minuscole greche corsive e librerie,” *Aegyptus* 57 (1977), pp. 166–89.
10. The following publications present different opinions: Giancarlo Prato, “Attività scrittoria in Calabria tra IX e X secolo,” *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 36 (1986), pp. 219–28; and Lidia Perria, “La Minuscola tipo Anastasio,” in *Scritture, libri e testi nelle aree provinciali di Bisanzio*, eds. Guglielmo Cavallo, Giuseppe De Gregorio, and Marilena Maniacci (Spoleto: Centro italiano di studi sull’alto medioevo, 1991), pp. 271–318.
11. The most recent discussion of the decoration of the Patmos manuscript (The Holy Monastery of Saint John the Theologian, gr. 33) appears in Marco D’Agostino, *La Minuscola “tipo Anastasio.” Dalla scrittura alla decorazione* (Bari: Levante, 1997), pp. 5–14.
12. See Julien Leroy, “Les Manuscrits grecs d’Italie,” *Codicologica* 2 (1978), pp. 52–71; *idem*, “Caratteristiche codicologiche dei codici greci di Calabria,” in *Calabria bizantina. Tradizione di pietà e tradizione scrittoria nella Calabria greca medievale* (Reggio Calabria and Rome: Casa del Libro, 1983), pp. 59–79.
13. See Paul Canart, “Le Problème du style d’écriture dit ‘en as de pique’ dans les manuscrits italo-grecs,” in *Atti del IV Congresso Storico Calabrese* (Naples: F. Fiorentino, 1969), p. 69.
14. See André Grabar, *Les Manuscrits grecs enluminés de provenance italienne (IXe–XIe siècles)* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1972), p. 75.
15. See note 13, above. For more recent bibliography on the subject see Santo Lucà, “Il Codice Guelf. 53 Gud. gr.,” *Archivio storico per la Calabria e la Lucania* 50 (1983), pp. 5–12.
16. For the manuscripts produced by scribes in the school of Saint Neilos see Santo Lucà, “Scritture e libri della scuola niliana,” in *Scritture, libri e testi nelle aree provinciali di Bisanzio*, eds. Guglielmo Cavallo, Giuseppe De Gregorio, and Marilena Maniacci (Spoleto: Centro italiano di studi sull’alto medioevo, 1991), pp. 319–87.
17. See Herbert L. Kessler, “Lectionary,” in *Illuminated Greek Manuscripts from American Collections. An Exhibition in Honor of Kurt Weitzmann*, ed. Gary Vikan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 111.
18. See Marco D’Agostino, “Osservazioni codicologiche, paleografiche e storico-artistiche su alcuni manoscritti del gruppo Ferrar,” *Rudiae* 7 (1985), pp. 131–44.
19. See Alberto Doda, “Osservazioni sulla scrittura e sulla notazione musicale dei Menaia carbonesi,” *Scrittura e civiltà* 15 (1991), pp. 185–204.
20. For comparative material from Sinai see Kurt Weitzmann and George Galavaris, *The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai. The Illuminated Greek*

- Manuscripts*, vol. 1, *From the Ninth to the Twelfth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).
21. The latest reference to this material appears in Ernst Gamillscheg, "Handschriften aus Kleinasien (9.–12. Jahrhundert). Versuch einer paläographischen Charakterisierung," in *Scritture, libri e testi nelle aree provinciali di Bisanzio*, eds. Guglielmo Cavallo, Giuseppe De Gregorio, and Marilena Maniaci (Spoleto: Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 1991), pp. 181–201.
 22. See André Grabar, *Les Manuscrits grecs enluminés de provenance italienne (IXe–XIe siècles)* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1972), pp. 81–86.
 23. See Hans Belting, "Byzantine Art among Greeks and Latins in Southern Italy," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 28 (1974), pp. 3–29.
 24. See the problematic synthesis outlined by William D. Wixom, "Byzantine Art and the Latin West," in *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, eds. Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), pp. 435–49.
 25. *Ibid.*, p. 442.
 26. For the most recent publication on the subject see Thomas Forrest Kelly, *The Exultet in Southern Italy* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).
 27. See Eric Palazzo, "Le Rôle des libelli dans la pratique liturgique du haut Moyen Âge. Histoire et typologie," *Revue Mabillon*, n.s., 1 (1990), pp. 9–36.
 28. See Sharon Gerstel, "Liturgical Scrolls in the Byzantine Sanctuary," *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 35 (1994), pp. 195–204.
 29. See Hans Belting, *Studien zur beneventanischen Malerei* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1968), pp. 184–89.
 30. See Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, "Liturgical Roll," in *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, eds. Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), no. 64, pp. 110–11.
 31. On these liturgical rolls see Valentino Pace, "Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 9820, *Exultet*"; Francesco Magistrale, "Bari, Archivio del Capitolo Metropolitano, *Exultet* 1"; *idem*, "Troia, Archivio Capitolare, *Exultet* 3," in *Exultet. Rotoli liturgici del medioevo meridionale*, eds. Giulia Orofino and Oronzo Pecere (Rome: Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, 1994), pp. 101–6, 129–34, 423–29. On Vat. lat. 9820 also see Rebecca W. Corrie, in *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, eds. Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), no. 308, pp. 469–70.
 32. See Anna D. Kartsonis, *Anastasis. The Making of an Image* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), pp. 135–36.
 33. See Hans Belting, "Byzantine Art among Greeks and Latins in Southern Italy," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 28 (1974), pp. 14–22.
 34. See Carlo Bertelli, "Notazioni stilistiche," in *Rotoli di exultet dell'Italia meridionale*, ed. Guglielmo Cavallo (Bari: Adriatica Editrice, 1973), pp. 229–33.
 35. On the relations between Monte Cassino and Byzantium see Herbert Bloch, *Monte Cassino in the Middle Ages*, vol. 1 (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1986), pp. 3–112.
 36. See Lucinia Speciale, "Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Barb. lat. 592, *Exultet*"; Lucinia Speciale, "London, British Library, Add. 30337, *Exultet*," in *Exultet. Rotoli liturgici del medioevo meridionale*, eds. Giulia Orofino and Oronzo Pecere (Rome: Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, 1994), pp. 235–39, 249–52.
 37. See Beat Brenk, *Das Lektionar des Desiderius von Montecassino. Ein Meisterwerk italienischer Buchmalerei des 11. Jahrhunderts* (Zürich: Belser Verlag, 1987), pp. 112–22.
 38. See Giulia Orofino, "Omiliario," in *I Luoghi della memoria scritta*, ed. Guglielmo Cavallo (Rome: Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, 1994), pp. 38–39.
 39. See Hans Belting, "Byzantine Art among Greeks and Latins in Southern Italy," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 28 (1974), p. 20.
 40. See Paul Canart, "Le Livre grec en Italie méridionale sous les règnes normand et souabe: aspects matériels et sociaux," *Scrittura e civiltà* 2 (1978), pp. 103–62.
 41. See Santo Lucà, "Scritture e libri della scuola niliana," in *Scritture, libri e testi nelle aree provinciali di Bisanzio*, eds. Guglielmo Cavallo, Giuseppe De Gregorio, and Marilena Maniaci (Spoleto: Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 1991), pp. 352–53.
 42. See Marco D'Agostino, "Rotolo liturgico," in *La porpora*, ed. Doretta Davanzo Poli (Venice: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere e Arti, 1996), pp. 31–32.
 43. See Otto Kresten and Giancarlo Prato, "Die Miniatur des Evangelisten Markus in *Codex Purpureus Rossanensis*: eine spätere Einfügung," *Römische Historische Mitteilungen* 27 (1985), no. 49, p. 398. See also Edoardo Crisci, "S. Giovanni Crisostomo, *Liturgia*"; *idem*, "Vangeli delle Dodici Feste," in *Splendori di Bisanzio. Testimonianze e riflessi d'arte e cultura bizantina nelle chiese d'Italia* (Milan: Fabbri, 1990), pp. 228, 230.
 44. See Philippe Hoffmann, "La Décoration du Parisinus graecus 2572, schédographie otrantaise de la fin du XIII^e siècle (a. 1295–1296)," *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome. Moyen Âge, Temps Modernes* 96 (1984), pp. 617–43. The opinion proposed by Rebecca W. Corrie, that the manuscript in the Ambrosiana was produced "in a Campanian center such as Benevento," is unacceptable. See Rebecca W. Corrie, "Greek Gospel," in *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, eds. Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), no. 310, p. 472.
 45. See Marina Falla Castelfranchi, *Pittura monumentale bizantina in Puglia* (Milan: Electa, 1991), pp. 110–200.
 46. See Vera von Falkenhausen, "I Ceti dirigenti prenor-

- manni al tempo della costituzione degli stati normanni nell'Italia meridionale e in Sicilia," in *Forme di potere e struttura sociale in Italia nel Medioevo*, eds. Gabriella Rossetti et al. (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1977), pp. 321–71; Vera von Falkenhausen, "I Gruppi etnici nel regno di Ruggero II e la loro partecipazione al potere," in *Atti delle terze giornate normanno-sveve: Società, potere e popolo nell'età di Ruggero II* (Bari: Dedalo, 1979), pp. 133–56.
47. *Acta Sanctorum Septembris*, vol. 8 (Antverpiae, 1762), col. 821 B–C. The visit of Bartholomew of Simeri to Constantinople is the subject of the study by Gastone Breccia, "Dalla 'regina delle città.' I manoscritti della donazione di Alessio Comneno a Bartolomeo da Simeri," *Bollettino della Badia greca di Grottaferrata* 51 (1997), pp. 209–24.
48. Santo Lucà tends to underestimate these influences. See Santo Lucà, "Rossano, il Patir e lo stile rossanese. Note per uno studio codicologico-paleografico e storico-culturale," *Rivista di studi bizantini e neoellenici*, n.s., 22–23 (1985/86), pp. 93–170.
49. For a brief description of the manuscript see Jeffrey C. Anderson, "The Madrid Chronicle of John Skylitzes," in *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, eds. Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), no. 338, pp. 501–2.
50. See Santo Lucà, "I Normanni e la 'rinascita' del sec. XII," *Archivio storico per la Calabria e la Lucania* 60 (1993), pp. 36–63.

Church Architecture in Greece during the Middle Byzantine Period

I

Local differences always existed in Byzantine church architecture. They became more apparent, however, in the troubled period that followed the loss of the eastern and western provinces of the Byzantine Empire to the Arabs and the Franks, and the settlement of Slavic tribes in large parts of the Balkan Peninsula. One of the best-known local schools of Byzantine architecture is the Helladic school, which flourished in mainland Greece and on some nearby islands in the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries.¹ Its preeminence today can be attributed to the comparatively large number of extant buildings, and to their high quality of construction, as well as to the publications by such leading scholars as Gabriel Millet,² A. H. S. Megaw,³ Anastasios K. Orlandos,⁴ and Charalambos Bouras,⁵ among others. Our knowledge of church architecture of the eighth through the tenth century, which preceded the emergence of the Helladic school, remained very limited, however the publication of several studies during the last three decades has contributed to and extended our understanding of these structures.⁶

The period from the mid-seventh to the mid-ninth century has been viewed as a great gap in the continuity of the historic tradition

of Hellenism.⁷ Avars and Slavs occupied part of the countryside of the European provinces of the Byzantine Empire, while Arabs raided the coastal regions. Not one dated monument from this period is extant in Greece. Moreover, written sources for the period seldom mention southern and western Greece—regions of secondary importance in comparison with Thrace or Asia Minor, for example. An important change occurred in ecclesiastical architecture in Greece in the second half of the ninth century: Extensive remains of architectural sculpture attest to the construction of numerous churches,⁸ and inscriptions provide dates for five of these churches, two of which survive.⁹

During the Early Christian period and up to the seventh century, the prevailing church form was the basilica, a large rectangular hall usually with three aisles and a timber roof. Beginning in the ninth century, however, this was superseded by the cross-in-square domed church, with an emphasis on the vertical, as opposed to the longitudinal, axis. A dome, symbolizing heaven and resting on columns or piers, marked the intersection of two barrel vaults. The cross formed by these barrel vaults was inscribed within the overall rectangular structure of the church and rose above the corner bays, which helped to absorb the thrusts of the dome and the intersecting vaults. Either one or three apses protruded from the east side of the rectangular core of the church, and the narthex, in the form of an oblong vestibule, usually was attached to the west side. This new architectural form became so characteristic of Middle Byzantine churches that a distinguished historian proposed that the period be called “the era of the cross-in-square church.” The period from the fourth to the seventh century was known as “the era of the basilica.”¹⁰

There are several variants of the cross-in-square church. In Constantinople and the

surrounding regions, the so-called complex variant prevailed. Monuments in this category had a dome that rested on four columns and a sanctuary formed by three additional bays, attached to the eastern side of the naos. Although not a single ninth-century cross-in-square church survives in Constantinople, several churches known to have been erected in the city in the mid-ninth century or later appear to have exhibited features of the complex variant. The early-ninth-century church at Tirilye (Trigleia), on the southern shore of the Sea of Marmara, is an example of a complex variant structure.

A number of ninth-century cross-in-square churches survive in Greece. However, they represent another variant—one that developed in Greece independently of the complex variant prevalent in Constantinople—usually known as transitional.¹¹ In these structures, two longitudinal walls with narrow openings support the dome, and the eastern crossarm together with the adjacent corner bays form the sanctuary. Approximately twenty-five churches of the transitional variant survive: Ten are situated on the Greek mainland, two in Macedonia, one in Thrace, ten on the Aegean Islands, and two in Cyprus. Most of these churches date to the ninth and tenth centuries, with the earliest examples situated in mainland Greece and on the Aegean island of Naxos. The transitional variant of the cross-in-square church appears to have prevailed in Greece, and is not found in Constantinople or Asia Minor. A typical example of the transitional variant is the Church of the Panagia in Episkopi, located in the mountainous province of Eurytania in central Greece (fig. 1); dated to the early ninth century on the basis of several features of its clumsy construction, it was submerged beneath an artificial lake in 1965.

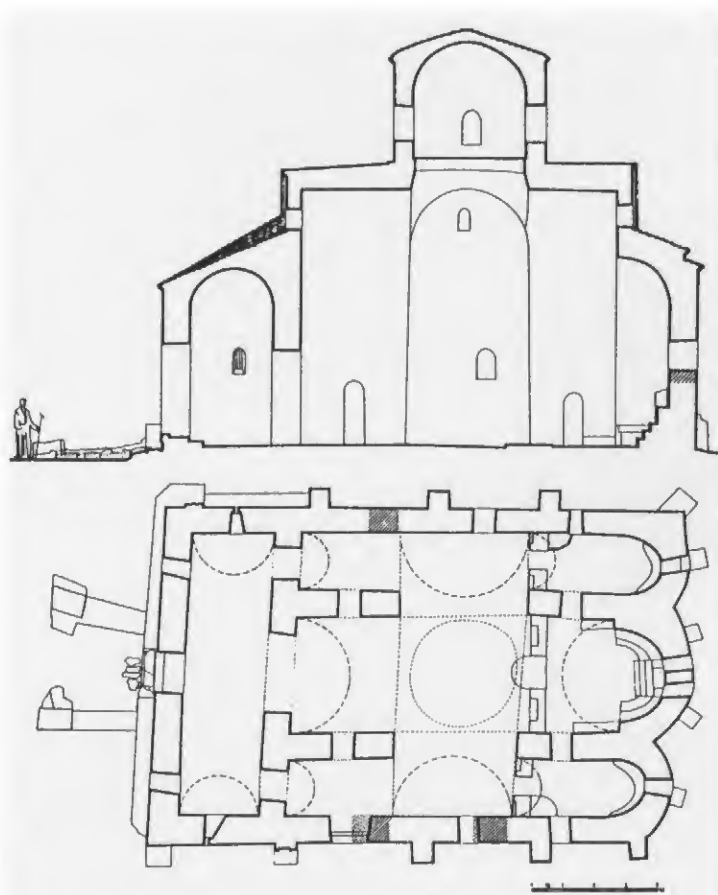


Figure 1. Church of the Panagia, Episkopi, Eurytania, Greece (longitudinal section and ground plan). Second half of the 8th century/first half of the 9th century. From P. L. Vocotopoulos, *He ekklesiastike architektonike eis ten Dytiken Sterean Hellada kai ten Epeiron apo tou telous tou 7ou mechri tou telous tou 10ou aionos*, 2nd ed. (Thessalonike: 1992), figs. 27–28



Figure 2. Church of the Panagia, Skripou, Boeotia, Greece (from the northwest). 873/74 (Photo: P. L. Vocotopoulos)



Figure 3. Palaia Episkopi, Tegea, Greece (from the south, in 1912). 10th century (Photo: German Archaeological Institute, Athens)

Many early publications cite the imposing Church of the Panagia in Skripou, Boeotia—which, according to an inscription, was built in 873/74 under the patronage of a high-ranking Byzantine court official—as the archetype of the transitional variant (fig. 2).¹² However, it is not the earliest-known example. Moreover, it is differentiated from other monuments in this group by its steep proportions, low corner bays, and the projection of the transverse arm of the cross to the north and south.¹³

The transitional variant of the cross-in-square church evolved gradually. Proportions changed and churches became less elongated. Openings between the longitudinal crossarm and the corner bays were widened and raised in height, eventually resulting in the reduction of the walls separating the aisles into mere pilasters—protruding from the east and west walls—and into four oblong piers, which supported the dome. Three subtypes of the cross-in-square church derive from the transitional variant: the tetrastyle, with piers replacing the longitudinal walls that supported the dome; the two-column subtype, with two walls in the east and two columns in the west supporting the dome; and a third, where short walls without openings supported the dome on the west side. While the two-column subtype frequently is encountered among monuments of the Helladic school, examples of the third subtype are known only in southern Greece and are restricted in date to the tenth and eleventh centuries.¹⁴

A very rare variant of the cross-in-square church, which exhibits an accentuated longitudinal axis with pairs of columns inserted between the piers supporting the dome and the east and west walls, is exemplified by the Church of Hagios Demetrios tou Katsoure near Arta, which is dated to the late eighth or early ninth century on the basis of its architectural features.

A variant of the cross-in-square church typically associated with Constantinople exists in southern Greece: The imposing

Palaia Episkopi in Tegea is distinguished by its small cupolas over the corner bays (fig. 3).¹⁵ The domed-ambulatory church type most frequently encountered in Constantinople and Macedonia is not found among surviving monuments in Greece. This form is manifest, however, in the church in Ano Lampovon, east of Argyrokastron, which was heavily influenced by architectural developments in nearby Macedonia.¹⁶

The cross-shaped plan used in Roman mausoleums and Early Christian martyria sometimes was employed in modest churches built outside the urban centers of Greece.¹⁷ The Church of Hagios Basileios tes Gephyras near Arta constitutes one of the best-preserved examples of such a structure (fig. 4).¹⁸

During the Middle Byzantine period, basilicas were not in evidence in Constantinople or in adjacent provinces, but in Greece they continued to be built, although they were far less numerous than domed churches. In keeping with the general trend of reduction in church size, Middle Byzantine basilicas, with their tripartite sanctuaries, were constructed on a much smaller scale than their Early Christian predecessors. While Middle Byzantine basilicas on the islands are barrel vaulted, those in mainland Greece are timber roofed and have clerestories (fig. 5), with the exception of some vaulted basilicas and halls of the Morea.¹⁹

Most Middle Byzantine churches in Greece are preceded by a narthex covered by a transverse barrel vault with a lean-to roof, and have no galleries. Also, contrary to Constantinopolitan practice, churches predating the thirteenth century are without porticoes or ambulatories. In a handful of churches, however, porches—supported by two piers or corbels—shelter doorways, as in the Church of the Panagia in Skripou (see fig. 2).

Early Christian churches in Greece were built of rubble interspersed with courses of one or more bricks. Rough-hewn stones with bricks added to fill large joints compose the masonry of churches constructed between



Figure 4. Church of Hagios Basileios tes Gephyras, near Arta, Greece (from the southeast). Second half of the 9th century (Photo: P. L. Vocotopoulos)

the eighth and tenth centuries (see fig. 4). On some monuments, especially those dated to the tenth century, the stones form regular courses, and small bricks placed horizontally fill the vertical joints. The masonry of the aisleless chapels of Mani consists of very large, rough-hewn blocks, and employs no mortar. In contrast to most churches of the eighth through the tenth century in Greece, the Church of the Panagia in Skripou is built of well-cut ashlar blocks and column drums collected from the nearby site of Orchomenos (see fig. 2). *Spolia* also are numerous in the Palaia Episkopi in Tegea (see fig. 3), and appear in several other structures.²⁰ It is noteworthy that the coursed masonry characteristic of Constantinopolitan churches of the Middle Byzantine period was not used in Greece.

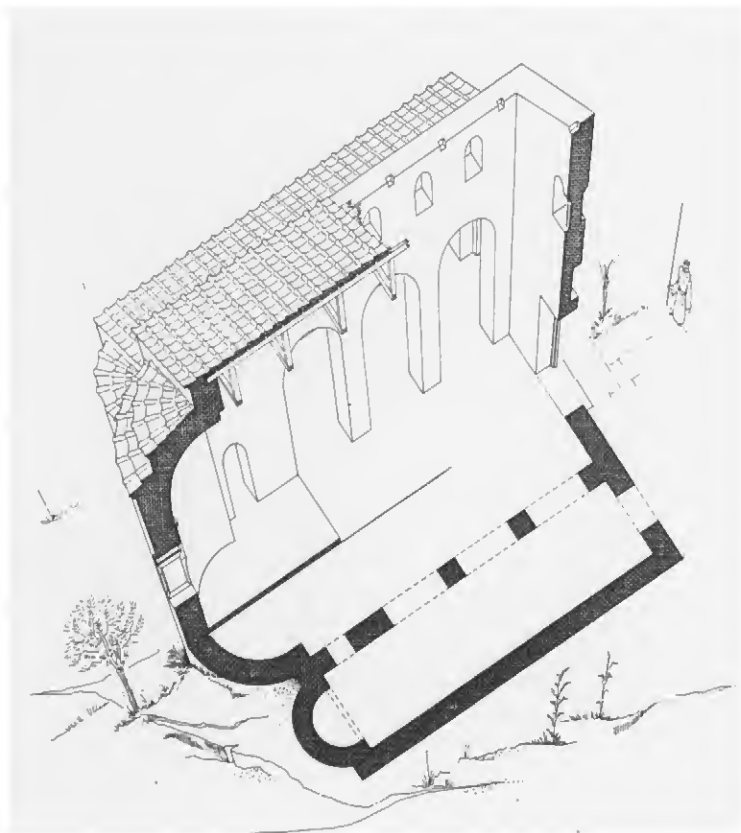


Figure 5. Church of the Panagia, Zourtsa, Peloponnese, Greece (restored section in perspective). Second half of the 10th century. From Ch. Bouras, "Zourtsa. Une Basilique byzantine au Péloponnèse," *Cahiers archéologiques* 21 (1971), p. 139, fig. 4

While Middle Byzantine churches in Constantinople are groin vaulted, those in Greece typically are barrel vaulted. These barrel vaults, usually of brick construction, in some instances are discernible on the exterior. Cupolas have cylindrical drums and conical roofs.²¹ Unlike the ribbed and pumpkin-shaped cupolas of many Constantinopolitan churches, and of churches in regions strongly influenced by architectural developments in the capital, the interior surface of the cupola is not articulated in most instances in the churches of Greece.

Middle Byzantine churches in Greece have either one or three apses on the east side.²² As in the Early Christian churches of southern and western Greece, the apses are rounded and, in a few early examples, are buttressed and have setback roofs (see fig. 1).²³ The cruciform recesses in the apses of the north church of the Lips Monastery (Fenari Isa Camii) in Constantinople and in the apses of two early churches in Bithynia also appear among the ninth- and tenth-century monuments of western and southern Greece. Approximately ten churches in Mani have two apses equal in size that probably were dedicated to two different saints. Churches with double apses also were widespread on some islands of the southern Aegean.²⁴

Arched windows, few in number and small in size, illuminate the interiors of these Middle Byzantine churches. In the majority of cases, windows have a single light; the exception is the window of the central apse, which usually has two or three lights. The ratio of height to width in tripartite windows varies from .565 in early-eighth-century monuments to 1.29 in a number of monuments from the late tenth century, and may provide a useful criterion for dating.²⁵ In the earliest Middle Byzantine churches of Greece, as in those of Constantinople and Thessalonike, a brick arch set into the masonry of the structure, without any further ornamentation, usually surrounds each window light²⁶—as, for example, in the Basilica of Mastroi and the Church of Hagios Demetrios tou Katsoure near Arta. In later monuments, the window arch is encircled by a single row of curved bricks or—from the mid-ninth century on—is decorated with a dentil course, usually extending horizontally.

The oldest Middle Byzantine churches in Greece had plain exteriors. However, beginning in the ninth century, church façades usually were articulated with saw-tooth brick bands, the earliest dated example of which appears on the Church of the Panagia in Skripou, of 873/74 (see fig. 2). Less common architectural decorative motifs

include zigzags, lozenges, and reticulate bands. From the ninth century on, reticulate bands, inspired by Roman architecture, were employed on buildings throughout the Byzantine Empire, from the Black Sea coast to southern Italy. Other elements sometimes embellish the usually flat exteriors of churches: For example, shallow pilasters adorn the churches of Hagios Demetrios tou Katsoure and Hagios Basileios tes Gephyras near Arta, as well as the Church of the Koimesis at Episkopi in Eurytania; marble cornices with vegetal motifs carved in low relief articulate the Church of the Panagia in Skripou (see fig. 2); and small niches enliven the dome of the church in Ano Lampovon.

In the interior, cornices often accentuate the springing of the vaults. In some monuments, such as the Church of the Panagia in Skripou and the *katholikon* of the Petraki Monastery in Athens, the cornices are marble and are decorated with a flat relief.

With the exception of churches in Mani, which are related to the architecture of the Cyclades and the Dodecanese, and the church in Ano Lampovon, which displays obvious Macedonian influences, monuments from the eighth through the mid-tenth century in Greece convey the impression of a homogeneous group. Their adherence to local traditions differentiates them from the monuments of the Constantinopolitan, Macedonian, and so-called Oriental schools (the last including many monuments on the Aegean Islands and in a large part of Asia Minor). As exponents of the pre-Helladic school, their distinguishing features include the simple and clear articulation of volumes; flat façades, which, on later monuments, are decorated with patterned brickwork in the form of sawtooth—and, less frequently, zigzagged or lozenge—bands, and with reticulate revetments; small windows; cupolas with cylindrical drums; semi-circular apses; domes and gables with straight contours; rubble masonry interspersed with bricks; and brick vaults with uniform surfaces, which are not articulated with ribs or concave segments. In

contrast, contemporary Constantinopolitan churches are characterized by brick-coursed masonry, three-sided apses, groin and domical vaults, walls articulated with blind arches and niches, and large windows.

While a number of Middle Byzantine churches in Greece reflect Early Christian architectural forms, such as basilicas or cross-shaped structures, the majority display cross-in-square plans. It is noteworthy that the cross-in-square church made its debut in Greece—which, in the ninth century, was a provincial backwater—at the same time as in Constantinople, although admittedly in the different, rather clumsy transitional variant, from which other forms were to develop, such as the one with two columns, extremely popular with the Helladic school. Surviving monuments create the impression of a provincial, unsophisticated, self-sufficient architectural school, which did not influence developments in Constantinople or Thessalonike, but which may be associated with some interesting buildings in distant regions. The Church of Saint John the Baptist (Sv. Ivan Kristutel) in Mesembria (Nesebŭr) on the Black Sea coast of Thrace, in present-day Bulgaria, is the sole example of the transitional variant there. The church is built of rubble, and has a tall, cylindrical dome, rounded apses, small windows, and pilasters—all features associated with the pre-Helladic school.²⁷

In spite of its local character, the pre-Helladic school has the distinction of having created some of the oldest extant Middle Byzantine churches, of inventing its own church type, and of nurturing one of the most remarkable manifestations of Eastern Christian architecture—the Helladic school of the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

II

The emergence of the Helladic school may be linked with the improved conditions, stability, and prosperity brought about by the reconquest of Crete in 961 and the defeat of the Bulgarians during the reign of Basil II

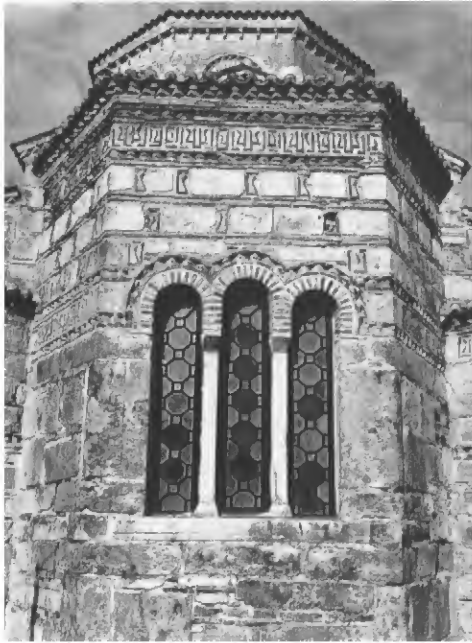


Figure 6. Church of Hagioi Iason and Sosipatros, Corfu, Greece (main apse). About 1000 (Photo: P. L. Vocotopoulos)

Figure 7. Church of Hagia Barbara, Eremos, Mani, Greece (from the southeast). Second half of the 12th century (Photo: P. L. Vocotopoulos)



(976–1025).²⁸ The most conspicuous feature of the monuments of the Helladic school is the use of cloisonné masonry, which employs dressed stones laid in regular courses and horizontally and vertically framed by bricks (figs. 6–10). The origin of this masonry technique may be traced to the Early Christian period, but its immediate antecedents are found in the early-tenth-century churches of Kastoria, which are constructed of rough-hewn stones.²⁹ The cloisonné brickwork functions as the facing for the rubble core of a structure, and frequently appears only in the upper courses or on the more significant features of a church (the dome and the apse). Rough-hewn stones laid in regular courses, with small bricks horizontally positioned in the joints, may constitute the facing of secondary surfaces (see figs. 6, 8), and large blocks of stone, sometimes laid in a cross pattern to articulate the surface and bind the masonry, occasionally constitute the lower masonry courses (see fig. 9).³⁰ Dentil courses may replace the simple tiles of cloisonné masonry in the horizontal joints extending around the arched windows and doors, and brick patterns, such as pseudo-Kufic-script motifs, may appear in the vertical joints.³¹ Kufic ornaments, which sometimes form whole friezes, frequently decorate the early monuments of the Helladic school (see fig. 6).³² They nearly disappear at the end of the eleventh century, but reappear, although on a limited scale, in the twelfth century. Another common motif on the exteriors of churches of the Helladic school is the Greek fret (see figs. 7, 9). Single or double cut-brick tiles were often used to decorate vertical joints or to form components of friezes on twelfth- and thirteenth-century monuments (see fig. 10). Checkerboard bands (see fig. 7) and glazed bowls imbedded in the masonry of domes, gables, and window tympana also enrich the façades of Helladic school structures.³³

Carved stone blocks separated by very narrow joints constitute the facing of some twelfth- and thirteenth-century churches.³⁴



The twelfth-century Church of Hagios Nikolaos "sta Kampia" in Boeotia provides one of the most skillful examples of this masonry technique (see fig. 8). In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, stone sometimes replaced brick for window dressings and cornices. The late-twelfth-century Church of the Panagia Gorgoepekoos in Athens is faced entirely with marble, and includes ancient and Byzantine reliefs on the upper wall surfaces.³⁵ Contrary to Constantinopolitan practices, brick facing was used only occasionally, and, even then, was restricted to small areas of the church.

Twelfth- and thirteenth-century churches of the Helladic school often were erected on a stylobate, their straight eaves in marked contrast to the arched eaves of Constantinopolitan churches. A horizontal dogtooth cornice frequently crowned the walls of churches of the Helladic school (see figs. 6, 7, 9), but it sometimes was omitted on late-eleventh-century monuments, and often was replaced with a stone cornice in the twelfth century (see figs. 8, 10).

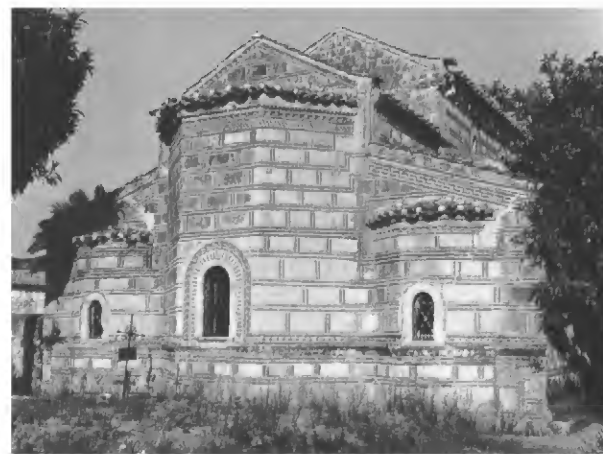
The doors and windows of churches of the Helladic school were almost always arched. The horseshoe form of some of these arches, like the pseudo-Kufic decoration,



Figure 8. Church of Hagios Nikolaos "sta Kampia," in Boeotia, Greece (from the southeast). Second quarter of the 12th century (Photo: P. L. Vocotopoulos)

Figure 9. *Katholikon*, Monastery of Daphni, Greece (from the east). Late 11th century (Photo: P. L. Vocotopoulos)

Figure 10. Church of the Theotokos Blacherna, Kyllini, Elis, Greece (east façade). Late 12th century (Photo: P. L. Vocotopoulos)



points to Arab influence.³⁶ Within each window were one to three lights of equal width, usually separated by slender marble columns.³⁷ In early churches, the lights of a window also were of equal or approximately equal height, and were crowned by a brick arch (see fig. 6). In the eleventh century, such arcaded windows were superseded by grouped windows that display individually arched lights within an arch that framed the entire window, from the jambs to the sill (see figs. 7–9). Arcaded windows only survive on monuments of secondary importance. Various brick designs, and sometimes glazed bowls as well, adorned the wall surface between the lights and the enframing arch. Beginning in the late eleventh century, the central light of tripartite grouped windows became taller than the two side lights, filling most of the tympanum (see figs. 8, 9). In the twelfth century, stone frequently replaced brick in window construction (see figs. 8, 10).³⁸ Lateral semi-arches usually decorated with bricks and glazed bowls often flanked windows positioned in the gables (see fig. 7).³⁹

The most common churches of the Helladic school were of the cross-in-square type, and these are represented by several variants, with the exclusion, however, of the

transitional variant.⁴⁰ After the turn of the first millennium, one variant that became widespread in Greece had a dome whose weight was supported by the walls separating the sanctuary from the lateral forechoirs and by two columns. Apart from those churches with characteristically Greek plans, more than twenty examples of the Constantinopolitan four-columned variant figure among the monuments of the Helladic school; one of the earliest and most important of these is the Church of the Panagia Theotokos of the Monastery of Hosios Loukas. Notable for its profuse Kufic decoration, the church displays a dome sheathed with marble slabs, a large two-columned narthex, and groin vaults in the corner bays (fig. 11)⁴¹—three features attributable to Constantinopolitan influence.⁴² However, the church type that is the glory of Middle Byzantine architecture—and that is found mainly among the monuments of the Helladic school—is the complex variant of the church on squinches. In these structures, the walls of the inscribed cross at the core of the building, and of the subsidiary bays, buttress a very wide dome that rests on eight, instead of four, points of support, and thus covers a vast unified space.⁴³ The earliest, largest, and most important church of this type is the lavish *katholikon* of the Monastery of Hosios Loukas (see fig. 11). Although built by the local aristocracy of Thebes, it probably was inspired by tenth- and early-eleventh-century Constantinopolitan structures now no longer extant.⁴⁴ Among the Constantinopolitan

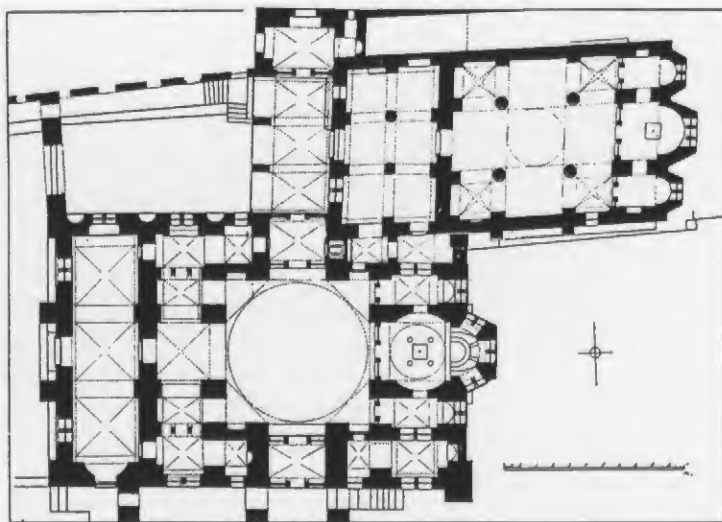


Figure 11. Plan of the four-columned cross-in-square Church of the Panagia Theotokos (second half of the 10th century) and the Greek-cross-octagon *katholikon* (first quarter of the 11th century), Monastery of Hosios Loukas, Phokis, Greece. From R. W. Schultz and S. H. Barnsley, *The Monastery of St. Luke of Stiris, in Phokis, and the Dependent Monastery of St. Nicholas in the Fields, near Skripou, in Boeotia* (London: 1901)

politan features exhibited by the *katholikon* are the groin vaults, which are also found in the arms of the inscribed cross; the niches that articulate the north façade; the shallow niches inscribed in the side walls of the narthex; and, at the gallery level, the double or triple windows with parapets installed in their lower halves. Other churches of the Helladic school whose domes rest on squinches include the Panagia Lykodemou, the largest medieval church in Athens; the *katholikon* of the monastery at Daphni (see fig. 9); and the church known as Hagia Sophia in Monemvasia. It is noteworthy that the Athonite variant of the cross-in-square church remained unknown in Greece, although there are several churches with a trefoil plan.⁴⁵

In addition to the standard church types, which exhibit only minor variations, there are some monuments of the Helladic school that display certain uncharacteristic features. The Church of the Hagioi Apostoloi in the Athenian Agora is very sophisticated in plan, and, curiously, was never imitated: It combines a cross-in-square with a half-inscribed tetraconch.⁴⁶ The Church of Hagios Nikolaos in Aulis, Boeotia—which is no longer extant—took the form of an inscribed triconch, but had the external appearance of a cross-in-square structure.⁴⁷ Other churches with interesting plans include the Church of Hagios Georgios in Loukisia, a tiny tetraconch;⁴⁸ the Church of Hagios Demetrios on Mount Varasova in Etolia, in partial ruin but a triconch in form, with an ambulatory encircling its western half;⁴⁹ and the Church of the Paliopanagia in Manolada, a cruciform structure also with an ambulatory in the western half.⁵⁰ The hideously disfigured *katholikon* of the Monastery of Hagios Theodosios in the Argolid has a cupola resting on four squinches.⁵¹ In addition to vaulted churches, some are timber-roofed basilicas; among the latter, the Theotokos Blacherna in Elis stands out (see fig. 10).⁵²

In the thirteenth century, a new cross-vaulted church type appeared in southern and western Greece, western Thessaly, the

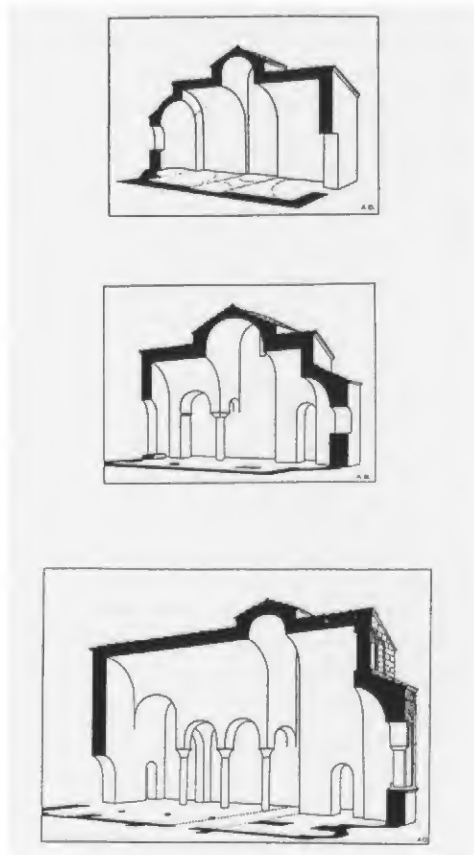


Figure 12. Perspective sections of (top) aisleless and (center and bottom) three-aisled, cross-vaulted churches. From A. K. Orlandos, “Hoi staurepistegoi naoi tes Hellados,” *Archeion ton Byzantinon Mnemeion tes Hellados* 1 (1935), figs. 1, 6, 7

region of Ohrid, and on some of the Greek islands, including Crete.⁵³ Most were without aisles, but there are also examples with three aisles (fig. 12). The earliest dated aisleless, cross-vaulted structure is the Church of Hagia Triada near Kranidi in the Peloponnese, erected in 1244. The plan, however, probably is older by a few decades. The three-aisled variant of the cross-vaulted church is encountered mainly in Epiros; the oldest example appears to be the much-altered Panagia tou Vryoni near Arta, dated to 1238.

With the advent of cloisonné masonry, apses became three sided and domes acquired polygonal drums, which usually were eight sided, except in churches with squinches, where they have sixteen facets (see fig. 9); a semi-dome with a level cornice (see figs. 8, 9) or arched eaves (see fig. 7) crowned the drum.⁵⁴ Churches with semi-domes displaying arched eaves were decorated with cornices and engaged piers of marble positioned at the corners of the polygonal drum; roofs generally were barrel vaulted, but domical and groin vaults also occurred.⁵⁵ In most cases, two intersecting barrel vaults crowned the bays of the narthex. The longitudinal vault was higher than the transverse vault and was covered by a gabled roof. A lean-to roof sloping to the west, or, more rarely, a saddle roof, protected the two sections of the transverse vault that flanked the longitudinal vault. Large two- or four-columned narthexes, which probably originated in Constantinople, were known in Greece even before they became common on Mount Athos.⁵⁶ Porches incorporating two columns sometimes precede the entrances to churches in Greece, such as those seen on some monuments of the Argolid.

Contrary to the Constantinopolitan practice of articulating exterior surfaces with arcades and niches, in churches of the Helladic school, brick decoration set against the white or yellowish stones of the masonry enlivens the otherwise flat façades. It should be noted, however, that pilasters supporting arches frequently enhance the arms of inscribed-cross and cross-shaped churches, as well as the transverse vault of three-aisled, cross-vaulted churches.⁵⁷ It is the relative popularity of the Constantinopolitan four-columned variant of the cross-in-square church, the use of groin vaults, and the appearance of niches in the side walls of the sanctuaries of complex cross-in-square churches and Greek-cross octagon churches of the Helladic school that provide evidence of Constantinopolitan influence.

The careful hewing of stones, and the use of stone instead of brick in the frames

and arches around windows and doors and for the ribbed vaults of some early buildings—as, for example, the Monastery of Hosios Loukas—are local features that evolved independently of developments in Western Europe. On the other hand, the carving of the actual building material, instead of inserting sculpted marble blocks in the masonry, can be attributed to the influence of the Crusaders who settled in Greece after 1204.⁵⁸

Monuments of the Helladic school in Greece are found in the region south of the Gulf of Volos and the Gulf of Arta, in southern Thessaly, and on such islands as Andros, Zante, and Corfu. It appears that the Helladic school exerted no influence on developments in Macedonia, Constantinople, or the provinces adjacent to the capital. The intense building activity of the eleventh and twelfth centuries in the themes of Hellas and Peloponnesos apparently did not reach Epiros, where the few modest churches datable to these centuries combine features of the pre-Helladic and Helladic schools. The situation changed in the thirteenth century, when the town of Arta became the capital of a rapidly expanding Greek state, whose ambitious rulers almost succeeded in reclaiming Constantinople from the Latins. During the first three decades of the existence of the so-called Despotate of Epiros there seems to have been minimal construction, but many important churches were built from the late 1230s on. These monuments combined features of the Helladic school (such as the two-columned cross-in-square plan, cloisonné masonry, decorative brickwork, and semi-arches flanking gabled windows) with local elements (such as rough-hewn stones with horizontal bricks in the joints) and with decorative components of Constantinopolitan and Macedonian structures (for example, curved gables and certain forms of domes).⁵⁹ The monuments of the school of the Despotate of Epiros influenced the architecture of Akarnania, Thessaly, and western Macedonia.

The churches of the Helladic school radically differ from those of Constantinople and the Oriental school, and apparently were influenced by classical architecture. Classicizing features include the triple articulation of the façades (often with a stylobate and always with a triangular gable); the emphasis on the horizontal axis; the refinement of the stone carving; and the integration, in the façades, of classical reliefs, with missing parts sometimes successfully completed by Byzantine carvers. In contrast, in Constantinople, a city richly endowed with Early Christian rather than classical structures, it was the Late Antique building methods and forms that persisted.⁶⁰

1. In the context of this paper, "Greece" refers to the Greek peninsula, which, in the Middle Byzantine period, was divided into the themes of Hellas, Peloponnesos, and Nikopolis. For various definitions of the term see Constantine Amantos, "Glossogeographika," *Archaiologike Ephemeris* (1953–54), fasc. I, pp. 118–20; Dionysios A. Zakynthinos, *He Byzantine Hellas 392–1204* (Athens: E. G. Bagionake, 1965), pp. 14–18. I prefer the term "Helladic school" rather than the current "Greek school," which sometimes has been misinterpreted as referring to a national Greek school, thereby implying that the buildings of other regions, such as Constantinople and its hinterland, Thessalonike, or Epiros were not built by Greeks.
2. The pioneering work on this subject is Gabriel Millet, *L'École grecque dans l'architecture byzantine* (Paris: Leroux, 1916).
3. See [A.]H.[S.] Megaw, "The Chronology of Some Middle Byzantine Churches," *Annual of the British School at Athens* 32 (1931–32), pp. 90–130. Published more than sixty-five years ago, this work still retains its value.
4. Anastasios K. Orlandos is the author of numerous articles on the architecture of the Helladic school, which appeared in the *Archeion ton Byzantinon Mnemeion tes Hellados*, the *Epeteris Hetaireias Byzantinon Spoudon*, and other periodicals.
5. Articles by Charalambos Bouras have been published mainly in the *Deltion Christianikes Archaiologikes Hetaireias* since 1960.
6. See Panayotis L. Vocotopoulos, *He ekklesiastike architektonike eis ten Dytiken Sterean Hellada kai ten Epeiron apo tou telous tou 7ou mechri tou telous tou 10ou aionos*, 2nd ed. (Thessalonike: Center for Byzantine Studies, 1992), with further bibliography.
7. See Dionysios A. Zakynthinos, "La Grande Brèche dans la tradition historique de l'Hellénisme du sep-

tième au neuvième siècle," in *Charisterion eis Anastasion K. Orlandon*, vol. 3 (Athens: Archaeological Society, 1966), pp. 300–327.

8. See A. H. S. Megaw, "The Skripou Screen," *Annual of the British School at Athens* 61 (1966), pp. 18–20. According to Megaw, "No body of material of comparative bulk has been identified in Greece for any other period between the sixth and the eleventh centuries."
9. See Nicolas Oikonomides, "Pour une Nouvelle Lecture des inscriptions de Skripou en Béotie," *Travaux et Mémoires* 12 (1994), pp. 479–93, esp. pp. 482–83; Charalambos Bouras, "He architektonike tou naou tes Episkopes Skyrou," *Deltion Christianikes Archaiologikes Hetaireias*, 4th period, 2 (1960–61), p. 66.
10. See Dionysios A. Zakynthinos, *He Byzantine Hellas 392–1204* (Athens: E. G. Bagionake, 1965), p. 80.
11. See Panayotis L. Vocotopoulos, *He ekklesiastike architektonike eis ten Dytiken Sterean Hellada kai ten Epeiron apo tou telous tou 7ou mechri tou telous tou 10ou aionos*, 2nd ed. (Thessalonike: Center for Byzantine Studies, 1992), pp. 116–26, 244–47.
12. See, for example, Stylianos Pelekanides, *Byzantina kai metabyzantina mnemeia tes Prespas* (Thessalonike: Institute of Balkan Studies, 1960), pp. 16–22; Anastasios K. Orlandos, "Byzantina mnemeia tes Aitolakarnanias," *Archeion ton Byzantinon Mnemeion tes Hellados* 9 (1961), pp. 14–19.
13. See Maria Sotiriou, "Ho naos tes Skripous tes Boiotias," *Archaiologike Ephemeris* (1931), pp. 119–57; Panayotis L. Vocotopoulos, *He ekklesiastike architektonike eis ten Dytiken Sterean Hellada kai ten Epeiron apo tou telous tou 7ou mechri tou telous tou 10ou aionos*, 2nd ed. (Thessalonike: Center for Byzantine Studies, 1992), pp. 118–20, 246–47. The cupola of the church was rebuilt in 1929 following an earthquake. On the founder of the church see Nicolas Oikonomides, "Pour une Nouvelle Lecture des inscriptions de Skripou en Béotie," *Travaux et Mémoires* 12 (1994), pp. 485–93.
14. See Panayotis L. Vocotopoulos, *He ekklesiastike architektonike eis ten Dytiken Sterean Hellada kai ten Epeiron apo tou telous tou 7ou mechri tou telous tou 10ou aionos*, 2nd ed. (Thessalonike: Center for Byzantine Studies, 1992), pp. 117–18, 246.
15. See Anastasios K. Orlandos, "Palaiochristianika kai Byzantina mnemeia Tegeas-Nykliou," *Archeion ton Byzantinon Mnemeion tes Hellados* 12 (1973), pp. 141–63.
16. See Panayotis L. Vocotopoulos, *He ekklesiastike architektonike eis ten Dytiken Sterean Hellada kai ten Epeiron apo tou telous tou 7ou mechri tou telous tou 10ou aionos*, 2nd ed. (Thessalonike: Center for Byzantine Studies, 1992), pp. 86–92, 193–96, 240–42, 252–53. While most scholars date the church in Ano Lampovon to the tenth century, some favor a date in the twelfth or the thirteenth century.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 107–9, 244.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 216.

19. Ibid., pp. 95–105, 242–43.
20. See Panayotis L. Vocotopoulos, "Peri ten chronologin tou en Kerkyra naou ton Hagion Iasonos kai Sosipatrou," *Deltion Christianikes Archaialogikes Hetaireias*, 4th period, 5 (1966–69), pp. 160–61; Charalambos Bouras, "Byzantines 'Anagenneseis' kai he architektonike tou 11ou kai 12ou aionos," *Deltion Christianikes Archaialogikes Hetaireias*, 4th period, 5 (1966–69), pp. 258–59.
21. Ibid., pp. 156–61, 249. Rectangular drums, such as those on the Church of Hagios Nikolaos in Platsa, in Mani, and on the Church of Hagia Triada near Agrinion, are exceptions.
22. Ibid., pp. 151–55, 249.
23. Buttressed apses and setback roofs are features encountered in Early Christian churches of western Greece.
24. On these churches see Georgios Dimitrakakis, *Hoi dikontoi christianikoi naoi* (Athens: Grigoris, 1976).
25. See Panayotis L. Vocotopoulos, *He ekklesiastike architektonike eis ten Dytiken Sterean Hellada kai ten Epeiron apo tou telous tou 7ou mechri tou telous tou 10ou aionos*, 2nd ed. (Thessalonike: Center for Byzantine Studies, 1992), pp. 161–68.
26. The windows of the Church of the Panagia in Skripou are exceptions, as most of them have stone voussours; see figure 2.
27. See Alexander Rachénov, *Églises de Mésémvria* (Sofia: 1932), pp. 89–98; Panayotis L. Vocotopoulos, "The Role of Constantinopolitan Architecture during the Middle and Late Byzantine Period," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 31/2 (1981), p. 573.
28. On the Helladic school see Gabriel Millet, *L'École grecque dans l'architecture byzantine* (Paris: Leroux, 1916); [A.]H.[S.] Megaw, "The Chronology of Some Middle Byzantine Churches," *Annual of the British School at Athens* 32 (1931–32), pp. 90–130; Charalambos Bouras, "Byzantines 'Anagenneseis' kai he architektonike tou 11ou kai 12ou aionos," *Deltion Christianikes Archaialogikes Hetaireias*, 4th period, 5 (1966–69), pp. 247–72; Richard Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*, 4th ed., The Pelican History of Art (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1986), pp. 379–95.
29. On the masonry techniques of the Helladic school see: [A.]H.[S.] Megaw, "The Chronology of Some Middle Byzantine Churches," *Annual of the British School at Athens* 32 (1931–32), pp. 100–102; Charalambos Bouras, "Byzantines 'Anagenneseis' kai he architektonike tou 11ou kai 12ou aionos," *Deltion Christianikes Archaialogikes Hetaireias*, 4th period, 5 (1966–69), pp. 268–70; G. Hadji-Minaglou, "Le Grand Appareil dans les églises des IXe–XIIe siècles de la Grèce du Sud," *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique* 118 (1994), pp. 161–97. On an Early Christian antecedent see Panayotis L. Vocotopoulos, *Praktika tes en Athenais Archaialogikes Hetaireias* (1979), p. 123, pl. 87 a. On cloisonné masonry in Kastoria see Nikolaos K. Moutsopoulos, *Ekklesies tes Kastorias* (Thessalonike: Parateretes, 1992), pp. 96–100.
30. See [A.]H.[S.] Megaw, "The Chronology of Some Middle Byzantine Churches," *Annual of the British School at Athens* 32 (1931–32), p. 102; Anastasios K. Orlandos, "Ek tes christianikes Messenes," *Archeion ton Byzantinon Mnemeion tes Hellados* 11 (1969), pp. 110–13; G. Hadji-Minaglou, "Le Grand Appareil dans les églises des IXe–XIIe siècles de la Grèce du Sud," *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique* 118 (1994), pp. 174–83.
31. On the brick decoration of the façades of monuments of the Helladic school see [A.]H.[S.] Megaw, "The Chronology of Some Middle Byzantine Churches," *Annual of the British School at Athens* 32 (1931–32), pp. 102–20, 124–26; Georgios Velenis, "He keramoplastike diakosmese san toichodomike lyse sta byzantina ktismata," *Actes du XV^e Congrès International d'Études Byzantines*, vol. 2 (Athens: Archaeological Society, 1981), pp. 901–6.
32. See [A.]H.[S.] Megaw, "The Chronology of Some Middle Byzantine Churches," *Annual of the British School at Athens* 32 (1931–32), pp. 104–9; Nikolaos Nikonanos, "Keramoplastikes koupikes diakosmeseis se mnemeia tes perioches ton Athenon," in *Aphieromate mneme Stylianou Pelekanide* (Thessalonike: Society of Macedonian Studies, 1983), pp. 330–51.
33. For the checkerboard bands see A. H. S. Megaw, "Byzantine Reticulate Revetments," in *Charisterion eis Anastasion K. Orlandon*, vol. 3 (Athens: Archaeological Society, 1966), pp. 10–22. For the glazed bowls see *idem*, "Glazed Bowls in Byzantine Churches," *Deltion Christianikes Archaialogikes Hetaireias*, 4th period, 4 (1964–65), pp. 145–62; Georgios Nikolakopoulos, *Entoichismena kerameika stis opseis ton mesaionikon kai epi tourkokratias ekklesion mas*, vols. 1–3 (Athens: 1978–79).
34. See Charalambos Bouras, *Byzantina staurotholia me neuroseis* (Athens: Archaeological Service, 1965), pp. 70–71; *idem*, "Byzantines 'Anagenneseis' kai he architektonike tou 11ou kai 12ou aionos," *Deltion Christianikes Archaialogikes Hetaireias*, 4th period, 5 (1966–69), pp. 269–70.
35. See Karl Michel and Adolf Struck, "Die mittelbyzantinischen Kirchen Athens," *Athenische Mitteilungen* 31 (1906), pp. 281–324; Paul Steiner, "Antike Skulpturen an der Panagia Gorgoeipikoos zu Athen," *Athenische Mitteilungen* 31 (1906), pp. 325–41.
36. See Anastasios K. Orlandos, "To petalomorphon toxon en te byzantine Helladi," *Epeteris Hetaireias Byzantinon Spoudon* 11 (1935), pp. 411–15.
37. See [A.]H.[S.] Megaw, "The Chronology of Some Middle Byzantine Churches," *Annual of the British School at Athens* 32 (1931–32), pp. 120–26; Georgios Velenis, *Hermeneia tou exoterikou diakosmou ste byzantine architektonike* (Thessalonike: University of Thessalonike, 1984), pp. 112–23.
38. See [A.]H.[S.] Megaw, "The Chronology of Some Middle Byzantine Churches," *Annual of the British School at Athens* 32 (1931–32), pp. 122–23.
39. Ibid., pp. 126–28; Georgios Velenis, *Hermeneia tou exoterikou diakosmou ste byzantine architektonike*

- (Thessalonike: University of Thessalonike, 1984), pp. 262–74.
40. See Maria Sotiriou, “To katholikon tes Mones Petrake Athenon,” *Deltion Christianikes Archaialogikes Hetaireias*, 4th period, 2 (1960–61), pp. 114–27.
 41. See R. W. Schultz and S. H. Barnsley, *The Monastery of St. Luke of Stiris, in Phokis, and the Dependent Monastery of St. Nicholas in the Fields, near Skripou, in Boeotia* (London: Macmillan, 1901); Eustathios Stikas, *To oikodomikon chronikon tes Mones Hosiou Louka Phokidos* (Athens: Archaeological Society, 1970); Laskarina Bouras, *Ho glyptos diakosmos tou naou tes Panagias sto monasteri tou Hosiou Louka* (Athens: Archaeological Society, 1980); Paul Mylonas, “Gavits arméniens et litae byzantines. Observations nouvelles sur le complexe de Saint-Luc en Phocide,” *Cahiers archéologiques* 38 (1990), pp. 99–122.
 42. See Panayotis L. Vocotopoulos, “The Role of Constantinopolitan Architecture during the Middle and Late Byzantine Period,” *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 31/2 (1981), pp. 564–65.
 43. See Eustathios Stikas, *L’Église byzantine de Christianou en Triphylie (Péloponnèse) et les autres édifices de même type* (Paris: de Boccard, 1951), pp. 40–45.
 44. See note 41, above.
 45. See Panayotis L. Vocotopoulos, “Ho trikonchos naos tou Hagiou Nikolaou sto Platani tes Achaïas,” in *Harmos. Timetikos tomos ston Kathegete N. K. Moutsopoulo*, vol. 1 (Thessalonike: University of Thessalonike, 1990), pp. 389–91, with further bibliography.
 46. See Alison Frantz, *The Church of the Holy Apostles, The Athenian Agora*, vol. 20 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971).
 47. See Charalambos Bouras, “Sympleromatika stoicheia gia hena katestrammeno nao tes Boiotias,” *Deltion Christianikes Archaialogikes Hetaireias*, 4th period, 4 (1964–65), pp. 227–43.
 48. See Anastasios K. Orlandos, “Ho Hag. Georgios ton Loukision,” *Archeion ton Byzantinon Mnemeion tes Hellados* 3 (1937), pp. 166–71.
 49. See Anastasios K. Orlandos, “Ho Hag. Demetrios tes Barasobas,” *Archeion ton Byzantinon Mnemeion tes Hellados* 1 (1935), pp. 105–20.
 50. See Charalambos Bouras, “He Paliopanagia ste Manolada,” *Epistemonike Epeteris tes Polytechnikes Scholes tou Panepistemiou Thessalonikes* 4 (1969), pp. 233–61.
 51. See Eustathios Stikas, *L’Église byzantine de Christianou en Triphylie (Péloponnèse) et les autres édifices de même type* (Paris: de Boccard, 1951), pp. 46–47; *idem*, “Une Rare Application de trompes dans une église byzantine en Argolide (Grèce),” in *Atti dello VIII Congresso Internazionale di Studi Bizantini*, vol. 2 (Rome: Associazione Nazionale per gli studi bizantini, 1953), pp. 260–64.
 52. See Anastasios K. Orlandos, “Hai Blachernai tes Eleias,” *Archaialogike Ephemeris* (1923), pp. 5–35. On Middle and Late Byzantine basilicas in general see Panayotis L. Vocotopoulos, *He ekklesiastike architektonike eis ten Dytiken Sterean Hellada kai ten Epeiron apo tou telous tou 7ou mechri tou telous tou 10ou aionos*, 2nd ed. (Thessalonike: Center for Byzantine Studies, 1992), pp. 95–105, 242–43.
 53. See Anastasios K. Orlandos, “Hoi staurepistegoi naoi tes Hellados,” *Archeion ton Byzantinon Mnemeion tes Hellados* 1 (1935), pp. 41–52; Hanns M. Küpper, *Bautypus und Genesis der griechischen Dachtranseptkirche* (Vienna: Verlag der österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1996).
 54. Gabriel Millet, *L’École grecque dans l’architecture byzantine* (Paris: Leroux, 1916), pp. 189–95.
 55. On groin vaults see Charalambos Bouras, *Byzantina staurotholia me neuroseis* (Athens: Archaeological Service, 1965), *passim*.
 56. Such narthexes are found in the Church of the Panagia Theotokos of the Monastery of Hosios Loukas, and in the Monasteries of Hosios Meletios and Sagmatas. See Panayotis L. Vocotopoulos, “The Role of Constantinopolitan Architecture during the Middle and Late Byzantine Period,” *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 31/2 (1981), pp. 564–65; Paul Mylonas, “Gavits arméniens et litae byzantines. Observations nouvelles sur le complexe de Saint-Luc en Phocide,” *Cahiers archéologiques* 38 (1990), pp. 90–122.
 57. See Gabriel Millet, *L’École grecque dans l’architecture byzantine* (Paris: Leroux, 1916), pp. 159–65; Stavros Mamaloukos, “Ho pylonas tes Mones tou Hagiou Ioannou tou Kynegou ston Hymetto,” in *Harmos. Timetikos tomos ston Kathegete N. K. Moutsopoulo*, vol. 2 (Thessalonike: University of Thessalonike, 1991), pp. 1113–16.
 58. See Charalambos Bouras, *Byzantina staurotholia me neuroseis* (Athens: Archaeological Service, 1965), pp. 65–72; *idem*, “Byzantines ‘Anagenneseis’ kai he architektonike tou 11ou kai 12ou aionos,” *Deltion Christianikes Archaialogikes Hetaireias*, 4th period, 5 (1966–69), p. 270. I am indebted to Professor Bouras for discussing this topic with me.
 59. See Panayotis L. Vocotopoulos, “L’Architettura bizantina nella Grecia occidentale di terraferma,” in *L’Arte bizantina in Grecia*, ed. Adriano Alpago Novello (Milan: Motta, 1995), pp. 83–89. On the brickwork of the monuments in the Despotate of Epiros see Konstantinos Tsouris, *Ho keramoplastikos diakosmos ton hysterybyzantinon mnemeion tes Boreiodytikes Hellados* (Kavala, Greece: 1988).
 60. See Charalambos Bouras, “Byzantines ‘Anagenneseis’ kai he architektonike tou 11ou kai 12ou aionos,” *Deltion Christianikes Archaialogikes Hetaireias*, 4th period, 5 (1966–69), pp. 247–72.

Nubia, Egypt, and Byzantium

The Nile Valley in Egypt and in Nubia cannot be perceived as having been a culturally homogeneous area during the Middle Byzantine period. Divergent political and social developments led to cultural differentiation. At the beginning of the eighth century in Egypt, knowledge of the Greek language gradually declined and the state administration increasingly came under Arab influence. By the middle of the eighth century, monastic complexes experienced economic setbacks as a result of taxation and loss of public support in a society that was quickly embracing Islam. Such factors contributed significantly to the transformation of Coptic culture.

During the same period, the situation was quite different in Nubia: Administratively, it consisted of the territory between the first and the sixth cataracts of the Nile, which encompassed the area of the African Christian kingdom of Makuria and its capital, Dongola. From the third decade of the ninth century, and for the ensuing two hundred years, the dynasty founded by King Zacharias occupied the Dongolan throne and aspired to create a strong kingdom modeled on Byzantium. Greek remained the administrative and ecclesiastical language of Nubia; Coptic appears to have been prevalent only in monastic contexts. A *baqt* (treaty) resulted

in stable relations with the Arab world, and dynastic aspirations brought about economic prosperity and the dynamic development of Nubian culture, which experienced its Golden Age in the ninth and tenth centuries. Since Egypt and Nubia evolved along such different lines, I will address their artistic development separately. Contrary to the sequence followed in most works on this subject, Nubia will be discussed first.

I

From the beginning of the ninth through the twelfth century, the Nubian kingdom forged a cultural identity based on its great monuments dating from the end of the seventh and the beginning of the eighth century, including the cathedrals in Dongola,¹ Faras,² Qasr Ibrīm,³ and on the Sai island. Of these structures, only Paulos Cathedral in Faras (Pachoras), built about 707, is well preserved architecturally and even retains some of its original painting.⁴ Both the architecture of this cathedral and the style of the eighth-century Faras paintings attest to the existence of an established local tradition.⁵ Undoubtedly, this tradition owes much to Egypt, but it was not created as a unilateral response to Egyptian influences. For example, Syro-Palestinian developments also seem to have played a stimulating role, although their precise contributions remain to be determined.⁶ The Nubian kingdom was not isolated from the rest of the Christian world, as is sometimes assumed, but interacted with it. Moreover, Egypt did not mediate in these contacts; Nubia independently sought associations that provided desirable political and/or cultural models. The continuing use of Greek titles and honorific epithets and the fact that the Greek language served as the main vehicle for communication with the outside

world demonstrate Nubian efforts to sustain a dialogue with other Christian states.⁷ Details of the representation of the king and his closest attendants in Nubian painting further corroborate this conclusion. Although it is still difficult to identify clearly the processes of appropriation, recent research, focusing on specific aspects of Nubian cultural development, indicates a broad range of influences.

There are only a few extant mid-ninth-through tenth-century representations of Nubian kings, queens, eparchs, and bishops. These images reflect Nubian concepts of authority and reveal the sources Nubian nobles selected to emulate in their public presentations. On the west wall of the baptistery in Petros Cathedral in Faras (Pachoras), in the upper register, above the representation of Saint John the Baptist, are images of King Georgios II (r. about 940–about 975)⁸ and Metropolitan Petros of Pachoras (r. 974–99).⁹ Metropolitan Petros was responsible for the mid-tenth-century rebuilding of the cathedral in Faras, which incorporated within its structure the early-eighth-century Paulos Cathedral, and for its redecoration with new paintings. The extant paintings are now dispersed between the collections of the National Museum in Khartoum and the Faras Gallery of the National Museum in Warsaw. The fresco of Georgios II—identified by the inscription Γεωργίου βλς πολα τα ετη υς Ζαχαρια βλς (King Georgios, [may he live] many years, son of King Zacharias)—shows the king wearing a white tunic fastened with a belt, a white overcoat, and a crown surmounted with crosses, and holding a cross in his right hand (fig. 1). Avian protrusions with *prependoulia* (hanging ornaments) extend from one side of the crown, which also consists of two arched bands supporting a six-armed star. The Theotokos (Mother of God), the patroness of Petros Cathedral,



Figure 1. King Georgios II, from the baptistery of Petros Cathedral, Faras (Pachoras), Sudan. Nubian, second half of the 10th century. Fresco: Height, 252 cm. National Museum, Warsaw



Figure 2. Drawing of the crown worn by King Georgios II in a fresco from the church in Sonqi Tino, Sudan. Nubian, second half of the 10th century

stands behind the king, resting her arms on his shoulders while supporting the Christ Child, who grasps a codex and places his right hand on the king's crown, thereby emphasizing the divine origin of the authority of the Nubian king.

A similar representation of a Nubian ruler, most probably Zacharias (r. 920–about 940), father of Georgios II, decorated the apse of Petros Cathedral.¹⁰ In this fresco, the gesture of the Theotokos toward the king is identical to that in the portrait of King Georgios II. However, due to damage in the upper part of the fresco, details of the depiction of the Christ Child are lost.

The small church in Sonqi Tino also contains an image of King Georgios II,¹¹ however, here, Christ stands behind the king, and the details of the king's crown, especially the right projection, are better preserved (fig. 2). The depicted crown resembles the votive crown of the Byzantine emperor Leo VI (r. 886–912), now in Venice.¹² The Theotokos wears this type of crown in a fresco that originally decorated the eastern part of the north aisle of Petros Cathedral

and is now in the National Museum in Khartoum. In this fresco, the Theotokos guards Queen Martha, the mother or wife of King Georgios II (fig. 3). An inscription identifies the queen: *Μαρθα μηρ βλς πολλα τα ετη* (Martha, mother of the king [may she live] many years).¹³ Queen Martha's costume consists of a tunic, a cape, and a crown. Rows of pearls and precious stones ornament the borders of the diadem of the crown, which is surmounted by three (originally four) panels also decorated with pearls and precious stones. The central panel supports a cross, while the side panels are wing shaped.

In the contemporary Nativity¹⁴ and Theotokos *Galaktotrophousa* (Mother of God nursing the Child)¹⁵ frescoes from the north aisle of Petros Cathedral, the Theotokos wears a slightly different crown from that of Queen Martha: It is domed and surmounted by a cross, while that of the queen supports a cross on two arched bands; also, the shapes of the central panels of the crowns differ. The question arises as to whether these differences signify something specific or whether they simply reflect stylistic conventions. While in the frescoes of the Nativity and the Theotokos *Galaktotrophousa* the Theotokos wears the crown of Nubian kings, in other representations her crown is like that of Queen Martha. Perhaps by representing Queen Martha with a crown like that worn by the Theotokos in other instances, the artist and/or patron wanted to emphasize the divine source of the queen's authority and to suggest a parallel between the Theotokos as Mother of God and the queen as mother of the king, the heir to the throne.

The king's mother (*μηρ βλς*) played a significant role in the Nubian court. According to protocol, she always was mentioned immediately after the king, as is illustrated by the dedicatory inscription of the Nobatian eparch Iesu (dated to 930; from a church in Faras), where the name Mariam is cited after King Zacharias, the son of King Georgios.¹⁶ Mariam could be the mother of King



Figure 3. (left) Queen Martha, from the north aisle of Petros Cathedral, Faras (Pachoras), Sudan. Nubian, second half of the 10th century. Fresco: Height, 225 cm. National Museum, Khartoum

Figure 4. (above) Unknown queen, from the north aisle of Paulos Cathedral, Faras (Pachoras), Sudan. Nubian, second half of the 9th century. Fresco: Height, 100 cm. National Museum, Khartoum

Georgios II, whose portrait is preserved in the Petros Cathedral baptistery, in which case Queen Martha, mother of the heir to the throne, who also is represented in this cathedral, would then be the wife of Georgios II.

In paintings of the Late Period (11th–14th century), Nubian kings and their wives wear crowns of a different shape than those displayed by Nubian royalty in paintings of the Early Period (6th–9th century). On the other hand, in the Early and Late periods, the general features of the crown of the Nobatian eparch appear to have remained

the same. This is evident from a comparison of several representations of eparchs' crowns, including the crown preserved on the ninth-century fragment of stucco from House B in Dongola,¹⁷ and the crowns of the Nobatian eparchs depicted in Petros Cathedral and in the mid-thirteenth-century church in 'Abd el-Gadir.¹⁸ These particular depictions, as well as the representations of crowns in general, certainly reflect actual costumes.

A portrait of an unknown queen, dated to the second half of the ninth century and once located in the north aisle of Paulos

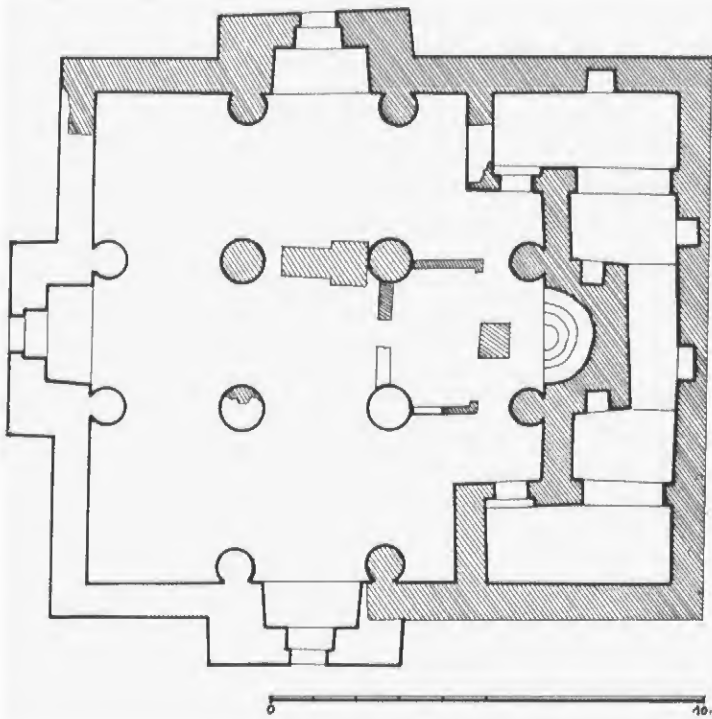


Figure 5. Plan of the pillar church, Dongola, Sudan. Late 9th century. Redrawn from W. Godlewski, "Old Dongola: Kom A, 1995," *Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean VII* (1996), fig. 2

Cathedral, further testifies to the direct contact between the Nubian and Byzantine courts.¹⁹ The surviving upper half of this image is now housed in the National Museum in Khartoum (fig. 4). It shows an archangel protecting a queen, who wears a diadem composed of square panels decorated with precious stones. Small panels flank the central large panel of the diadem. The most surprising aspect of the image is the queen's white complexion; Nubians usually were depicted with dark complexions—as, for example, the bishop Kyros (r. 860–902), in a fresco of about the same date, also from Paulos Cathedral.²⁰ Generally, the convention

of reserving white complexions for saints and depicting lay persons and clergy with dark complexions was strictly obeyed. Therefore, this mysterious queen is probably not Nubian. She could be the wife of Georgios I (r. about 856–87), who, as a young heir to the throne, made a diplomatic journey to Baghdad in 836, where he was received by Caliph Mu'tasim (r. 833–42);²¹ on this journey, he also met Patriarch Dionysios of Antioch (r. 818–45) and Patriarch Joseph of Alexandria (r. 837–49). Traveling through Muslim countries as a sovereign ruler with an extensive retinue including bishops, he was received warmly with due honors. This greatly impressed his contemporaries. While there are several reports on the journey, none mentions marriage to a Byzantine princess. Possibly the wedding to the princess whose portrait decorated Paulos Cathedral took place after the journey. It could even have been a diplomatic result of the journey. Moreover, the arrival of the wife of Georgios I and her entourage from Byzantium could have invigorated Byzantine influences in Nubia.

During the long reign of King Georgios I, two important structures were founded in Dongola, probably by the king himself. On the east side of the fortified town, on a steep cliff, a two-story, rectangular building was constructed, with an apse set within its eastern end (fig. 5).²² The building, which was damaged at the turn of the thirteenth century when the Mamlūk forces invaded Dongola, was converted into a mosque in 1317. Subsequently restored, it still stands, and preserves much of its original structure, revealing the influence of Byzantine prototypes. Over six meters high, the ground floor contains narrow rooms that do not appear to have been intended for any specific function, although they support the rooms on the first floor. A square room with four granite columns originally topped by a wooden roof—probably with a small central wooden dome—dominates the first floor, which also includes the throne room and audience hall of the Nubian kings. An aisle encircling the

square room provides access to an expansive apse on the east side of the building. Religious images cover the walls of both the square room and the monumental staircase that leads from the ground floor to the first floor and its terrace. The terrace opens onto a wonderful view of the river, town, and suburbs and, today, is the most picturesque place from which to photograph the ruins of Dongola.

The other building in Dongola, probably erected by Georgios I, was cruciform in plan (fig. 6).²³ Founded on the site of an earlier basilica, it is the largest sacred structure excavated to date in Nubia, measuring 35 x 37 meters. Three arms of the building provided entrances to the interior and the fourth, eastern, arm, slightly longer than the others, served as a commemorative chapel that contained the tombs of two men in the crypts of a mausoleum; the latter, which constituted the oldest part of the building, dates to the middle of the sixth century, the time of the Christianization of Makuria. The arms of the building communicated with the square, central crossing through double-tiered porticos. Probably, a large dome, fourteen meters in diameter, spanned the central crossing, in the middle of which stood a massive stone ciborium. The precious cross that was taken from Dongola by Mamlūk forces after the conquest of the town in 1276 originally may have been displayed under the ciborium. This cruciform building seems to have held a special significance for Nubian kings; its plan was modeled after Syro-Palestinian mausoleums and commemorative buildings. The contemporaneity of the founding of this church with the journey of Georgios I to Baghdad and the fresco of the queen with a pale complexion in Paulos Cathedral may be significant.

At the end of the ninth and the beginning of the tenth century, a church was built on an artificial platform on the west side of fortified Dongola;²⁴ it had an inscribed, cross-in-square plan, with four pillars supporting a dome over the central crossing. The

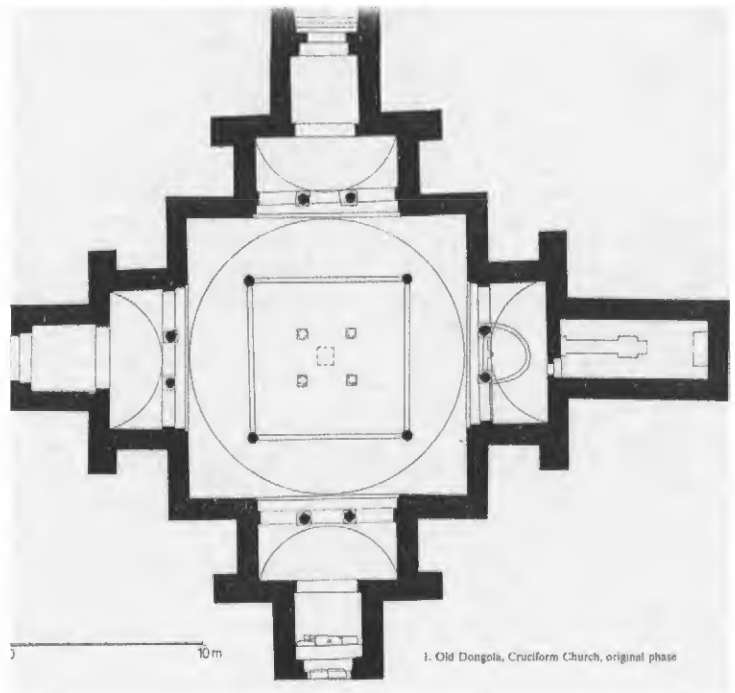


Figure 6. Plan of the cruciform church, Dongola, Sudan. Second half of the 9th century. Redrawn from W. Godlewski, "The Cruciform Church at Old Dongola (Sudan): Some Comments," in *Coptic Studies: Acts of the Third International Congress of Coptic Studies in Warsaw, 20–25 August, 1984* (Warsaw: 1990), fig. 1

core of the structure clearly was linked to the ninth-century Byzantine four-column cross-in-square plan. There is no doubt, however, that the Dongolan church is the work of local architects. The gamma-shaped pastophoria (auxiliary chambers) connected by passages behind the central apse attest to this. The church was modeled on the Cathedral of Dongola, and it effectively demonstrates the capabilities of Dongolan architects and their knowledge of current trends in ecclesiastical architecture in Byzantium. Its structure greatly influenced tenth-century Nubian

architecture, as the introduction of central domes during the rebuilding of the cathedrals in Dongola and Faras exemplifies. Details of the reconstructed churches, however, differed between Dongola and Faras. In Dongola, there was an attempt to preserve a columned naos; therefore, circular pillars were introduced in the central nave of the church to support the dome. In Faras, granite columns were encircled by pillars and a more harmonious interior was created.

During the time of Metropolitan Petros (r. 974–99), the reconstructed cathedral in Faras was decorated with paintings, which, with the exception of those on the dome and the vaults, are largely extant. Fairly homogeneous in style, they were executed by Nubian artists and, although iconographically conservative, were distributed on the church walls according to prevailing liturgical imperatives and not in the calendrical order of the Church feasts. Several compositions painted in the second half of the tenth century, which decorated the east walls of the aisles to the north and south of the apse, as well as the apse itself, best illustrate this point.

The apse displayed a double-register scene of the Ascension, showing Christ in Glory in the conch (this fresco is lost) and the Theotokos and apostles in the lower register. A representation of a king, almost certainly Zacharias, in the central part of the lower register, and a portrait of a bishop, probably Aaron, in the south part of this same register, completed the apse decoration. Recent studies claim that stylistically these images are closely related to the paintings on the west wall of the baptistery of the same cathedral. The king and bishop in the apse appear to be predecessors of the figures of King Georgios II and Metropolitan Petros from the baptistery.²⁵

A monumental, narrative representation of the Nativity decorated the east wall of the aisle to the north of the apse; it is now in the National Museum in Khartoum (fig. 7).²⁶ In this composition the Theotokos rests on a mattress and the Christ Child lies next to her

in a manger in the form of a stone altar with a niche. An ox and a donkey eat hay from the manger, while the Magi arrive on horseback to adore the Christ Child. Although the composition is related to the earlier Nativity in Paulos Cathedral, its narrative content is expanded and given a more monumental scale. The origin of this type of extended Nativity scene lies in Palestine, however such images already were prevalent in early Nubian painting.

Two Christological scenes appeared on the east wall of the aisle to the south of the apse: A monumental representation of Christ in Glory on the Heavenly Throne (now in the National Museum, Warsaw) originally was located immediately adjacent to the apse,²⁷ and a Passion cycle (now in the National Museum, Khartoum) once occupied the space on the short wall over the entrance to the *diakonikon* (sacristy).²⁸ In the former image, Christ, holding a scepter terminating in a cross in his right hand, and a Gospel book written in Coptic, and open to the prologue of the Gospel of Saint John, in his left hand, wears shimmering garments adorned with apocalyptic eyes. Below the figure of Christ, two flying angels adore a cross. In its location on the church wall, the fresco made Christ appear to preside over the actual Eucharistic liturgy taking place beside him. The Passion composition takes the form of a narrative cycle enclosed within a frame. The scene of the Descent from the Cross begins the Passion narrative. Joseph of Arimathaea supports the colobium-covered body of Christ, while a soldier, using enormous pincers, detaches Christ's left hand from the cross. The crucified thieves and the two other soldiers all focus their attention on Christ. The narrative next progresses to the scene of the Entombment, portraying Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus placing the shrouded body of Christ into a tomb in the presence of the Three Maries. The remaining episodes of the upper register, which are only fragmentarily preserved, probably depicted Mary Magdalene with the apostles before

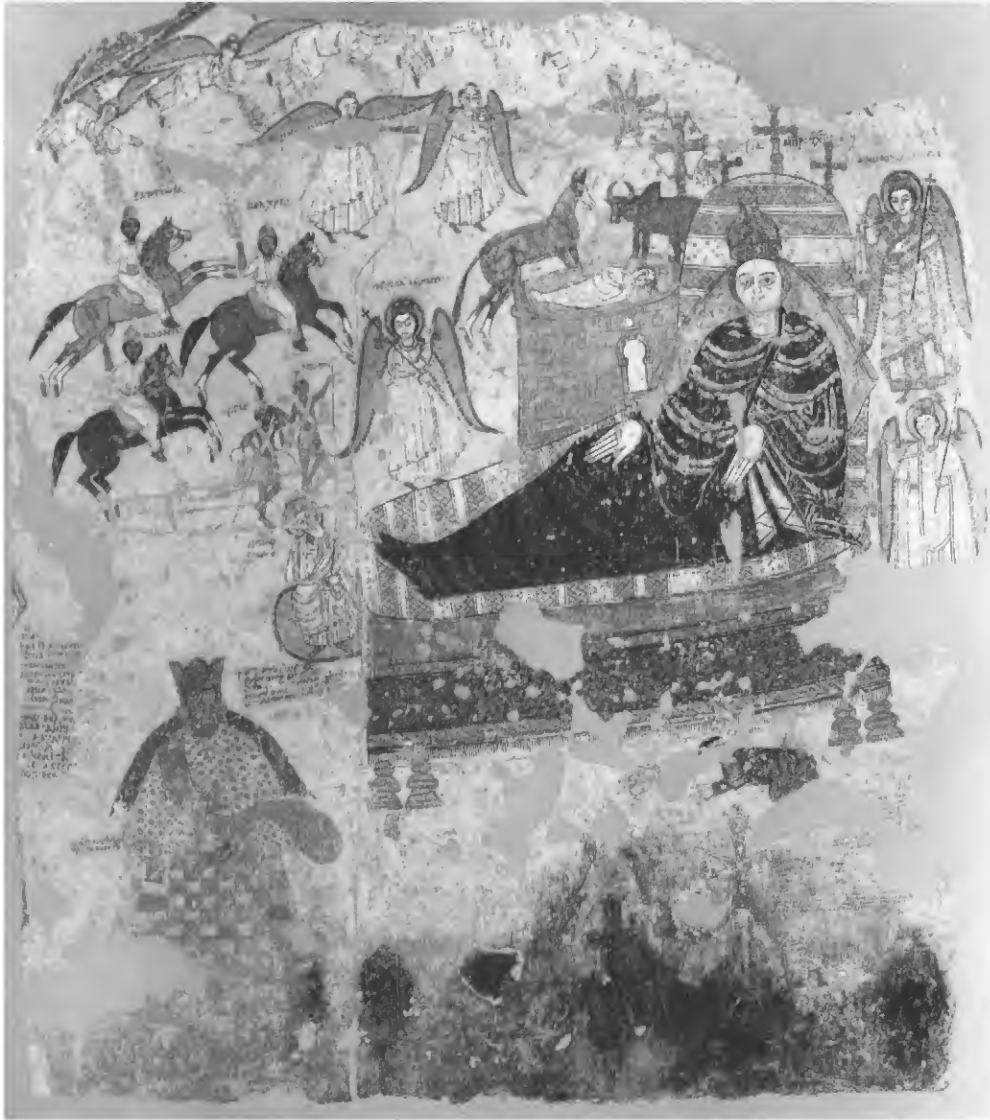


Figure 7. The Nativity, from the east wall of the north aisle of Petros Cathedral, Faras (Pachoras), Sudan. Nubian, second half of the 10th century. Fresco: 400 x 350 cm. National Museum, Khartoum

the empty tomb, and the appearance of Christ to Mary Magdalene. In the lower register, the best-preserved scene is the Anastasis (Resurrection). Dressed in white garments and carrying a long scepter terminating in a cross

in his left hand, the victorious Christ treads on Satan while extending his right hand to the naked Adam, who appears alongside the naked Eve. To the left of Christ, a snake, symbolizing eternity and captivity, entwines itself

around the necks of the deceased. The two other partially preserved scenes in this register represent the Incredulity of Thomas and the Miraculous Draught of Fishes on the Sea of Tiberias.

The paintings in the aisles and apse of Petros Cathedral constituted an abbreviated Christological cycle that comprised images of the Nativity (on the wall to the north of the apse), the Anastasis (on part of the wall to the south of the apse), the Ascension (in the apse), and Christ in Glory on the Heavenly Throne (on another part of the wall to the south of the apse). The cycle bore an intimate relationship to the liturgical ceremony that took place in the east end of the nave.

The liturgical aspects of the decoration of Petros Cathedral were even more pronounced in the frescoes of the prothesis (the sacristy where the Eucharistic elements were prepared) and the baptistery. A bust of Christ in a medallion (now in the National Museum, Khartoum) decorated the east wall of the prothesis, above the altar.²⁹ In this image, Christ, wearing the apocalyptic vestments, holds a chalice in his right hand in such a way that his forefinger touches the lip of the vessel. A Greek inscription from the adjacent wall explains the liturgical significance of the painting, citing the words of the Anaphora recited during the consecration of the Eucharistic wine.³⁰

A fresco depicting two angels adoring a bearded and long-haired Christ (now in the National Museum, Khartoum) decorated the shallow apse built within the thickness of the east wall of the baptistery.³¹ On the wall to the right of Christ was a list of the bishops of Pachoras,³² while on the opposite side of the room, on the west wall, Saint John the Baptist was shown holding an open scroll inscribed in Greek with the words, "Behold the Lamb of God."³³ It should be noted that the baptisteries in the Faras and Dongola cathedrals simultaneously functioned as chapels, and that the entire baptismal liturgy was performed within them, including the rites of Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist.

Other scenes depicted in the frescoes of Petros Cathedral in Faras are found in Nubia for the first time in the second half of the tenth century and unquestionably attest to connections with Byzantium. They are especially interesting, as only in Nubia are some of them preserved in such complete iconographic form. On the west wall of the north vestibule and on the inner surface of the arch connecting the vestibule with the nave two paintings representing the *Majestas Crucis* (a Theophany image featuring the cross) have survived; they are almost identical in their iconography.³⁴ In the center of a cross, four apocalyptic creatures surround a medallion containing a bust of Christ. A Greek inscription associated with one of the representations (now in the National Museum, Khartoum) reads: *ΙΣ Ο ΧΣ ΣΗΡ ΤΟΥ ΚΟΣΜΟΥ ΣΤΑΥΡΟΥ* (Jesus Christ, Savior of the World, of the Cross). Similar images of the Theophany from the same period were also found on the staircase wall of Petros Cathedral, in the central church in Abdallāh Nirqī, and in the small church in Sonqi Tino.

Another framed composition in Petros Cathedral consists of three identical images of the waist-length figure of Christ hovering in Heaven above three standing crosses and wearing a short beard and holding a bible in his left hand;³⁵ the central figure occupies the foreground and the two flanking figures appear in the background. Below the heavens, there is a Greek inscription: *ΥΣ ΠΤΡ ΤΟΥ ΚΟΣΜΟΥ ΤΟ ΠΝΑ ΤΟ ΑΓΙΟΥ* (Son, Father of the World, the Holy Spirit). In Nubia, this threefold image of Christ was not unique: A symbol for the Holy Trinity, it became quite popular in the Late Period, during the twelfth through the thirteenth century, and frequently appeared in portraits in which Christ, thrice represented, is shown blessing those portrayed. A splendid example of such a portrait is that of an unidentified queen, in the Monastery of the Holy Trinity in Dongola. This painting also exemplifies the high quality of Nubian painting in the second half of the thirteenth century.

The image of the standing apostles flanking the threefold representation of Christ (now in the National Museum, Warsaw, but originally on the east wall of the aisle, to the south of the apse, in the cathedral in Faras) also dates to the mid-thirteenth century;³⁶ it was located in the register below the scene of Christ in Glory on the Heavenly Throne, mentioned above. Together, the two images comprised a decorative program usually associated with the sanctuary apse. Indeed, a structure that could have served as an altar was positioned below the thirteenth-century painting, and walls were constructed to turn this eastern part of the south aisle into a chapel.

The Theophany and the Trinity, subjects that appear in Nubian painting from the second half of the tenth century, are unprecedented in monumental art elsewhere. Analogies for these compositions can be found, however, in Byzantine miniatures, thereby indicating that Byzantium was the source of their iconography.³⁷

The court in Dongola played a leading role in developing a distinctive style of Nubian architecture and, probably, also of painting. This is well documented for the Late Period, because recently, in the Monastery of the Holy Trinity, a large number of paintings were exposed on the walls added to the northwest part of the complex, in the area of the priors' mausoleum. From here come the newly discovered murals portraying scenes and figures from the Old and the New Testament, including the prophet Ezra, the Healing of the Blind Man (depicted as a Nubian), as well as the peculiar scene of the death of a Church hierarch, in which angels descend to take his soul. This last scene can be identified as the Dormition of Archbishop Georgios (d. 1113).

From the time of the Christianization of Makuria in the middle of the sixth century, Dongola was the most important center for the appropriation of Byzantine influences and for the dissemination of these influences to the northern part of Nubia, including Faras. The representation of a victorious



Figure 8. The Virgin and Child, from the Church of the Archangel Gabriel, Dayr al-Naqlūn. Egyptian, early 11th century. Fresco: Height, 200 cm

Christ trampling on a lion, a serpent, and a basilisk (Psalms 90: 13), found decorating a bath in a private house in Dongola, demonstrates this process of appropriation. The painting, now in the National Museum in Khartoum, dates to the beginning of the ninth century.³⁸

Despite some similarities, first recognized by Kurt Weitzmann,³⁹ between the early paintings in Faras (those of the eighth through the tenth century) and Syro-Palestinian art, Nubian art at a very formative stage developed a unique style of monumental painting, a distinctive canon of iconographical themes, and a specific system of distributing subjects in a church interior. For all its traditionalism, however, Nubian art

remained receptive to outside stimuli, particularly from Palestine; Egyptian influences seem to have been much weaker.

II

After the Arab conquest, and during the eighth and the ninth century, the style and iconography of religious art in Egypt followed an independent course of development. Neither the change in the state administration of Egypt nor contemporary trends in Byzantium (Iconoclasm) influenced the architecture of newly constructed churches, with their characteristic *khūrus* (choir; a spatial division in front of the sanctuary), or their decoration. While the decorative arts from the area of the Nile Valley, particularly metalwork and ceramics, document the importation of goods from Palestine and Mesopotamia, ecclesiastical monumental art such as architecture and painting does not provide such evidence. Probably this is the result of a much stronger demand for imported commodities in secular society than in Egyptian monastic and ecclesiastical communities. Also, the economic recession of the Alexandrine Church and the sudden decline in the number of Christian faithful resulted in a stagnation in the cultural dialogue with other Christian nations and fostered the development of indigenous traditions. Moreover, unlike the Church within the Byzantine Empire, the Alexandrine Church maintained an orthodox position on icons.

Not until the turn of the tenth century can we observe the first significant changes in Egyptian ecclesiastical art. At that time, churches related to the architectural types current in Byzantium, which displayed a central dome supported on eight pillars, began to replace the dominant form of the basilica with *khūrus*, in the territory of Thebaid. Examples include the church in Dayr as-Shayha, near Kubāniyyah,⁴⁰ and the church in Dayr al-‘Adhra, in Aswan,⁴¹ both of which are similar in that they have a square naos crowned with a small dome and an east end

composed of three square rooms with overhanging conches. The naos of the church in Dayr al-‘Adhra, however, is longer and is crowned with two domes. Peter Grossmann pointed out other similar churches in Kulb,⁴² in the territory of Nubia, which exhibit a typically Nubian treatment of the east end, with both sacristies connected to the passageway on the east side of the apse. Furthermore, as in the churches of Dongola, the lateral arms of the churches in Kulb form part of the central mass of each structure.

During the Fatimid period (969–1171), Egypt and Nubia shared a close relationship. There were many Nubians in the Fatimid court, as well as in the Aswan and Edfu regions of southern Egypt. Nevertheless, the apparent preference for centrally planned buildings in Nubia, as opposed to Egypt, is insufficient evidence to claim that structures with a dome supported on eight pillars resulted in a Nubian influence on Egyptian architecture.

The decorative program of the east apse of the church in Dayr al-‘Adhra both conforms to Egyptian norms and finds parallels in Nubian churches. Two angels flank the enthroned Christ in the conch of the apse and, in the register below, the Theotokos stands among the twelve apostles. The poor preservation of wall paintings in Egyptian churches of the Middle Byzantine period and their imprecise dating make analysis of this apse decoration difficult. Not until the first half of the thirteenth century is there evidence of a renaissance in Egyptian painting; extant frescoes include those in the monastic churches of Wādī Natrūn (Dayr al-Suryān and Dayr al-Baramūs), in the churches in Old Cairo, and in the monasteries on the coast of the Red Sea. The accidental discovery, after a fire, of earlier frescoes below the thirteenth-century painting in the west conch of the naos in the monastic Church of the Theotokos in Dayr al-Suryān⁴³ reveals how later layers of plaster and painting can hide significant examples of earlier wall decoration. The frescoes uncovered in the conch depict the Annunciation set against the cityscape of

Bethlehem: The Holy Virgin, seated on a throne, turns toward the approaching Archangel Gabriel, while Isaiah and Moses stand to the right and Ezekiel and Daniel to the left, holding unrolled scrolls inscribed in Bohairic with the prophecy of Mary's virginity. Greek inscriptions identify the figures. The date of the frescoes has been debated. Lucy-Anne Hunt places them between 1170 and 1180,⁴⁴ while Nicole Thierry⁴⁵ and Tania Velmans⁴⁶ opt for the beginning of the thirteenth century. The frescoes were associated by Paul van Moorsel⁴⁷ with events that transpired from the eighth to the tenth century in Dayr al-Suryān and by Karel Innemee⁴⁸ to the years preceding the sale of the monastery to the Syrians in 710. The research carried out on the paintings from other walls of the church will certainly yield more data, but this work will take several more years to complete.

Another group of paintings dated between 1022 and 1030 was exposed on the walls of the Church of the Archangel Gabriel in Dayr al-Naqlūn in the area of the Fayyūm Oasis. These paintings reflect the stylistic and iconographic complexity of Egyptian religious art of the time. In addition to traditional subjects, such as the double-register apse composition and representations of mounted saints, holy monks, and archangels, new themes appeared, or, rather, these themes were portrayed in a new way. Two scenes on the west wall of the naos are especially interesting. The first is a monumental image of the enthroned Theotokos holding the Christ Child, who is dressed in white vestments. This fresco is set within a painted niche in the south part of the wall. Two archangels in imperial costume flank the Theotokos and the Child, and two small pigeons perch on the edge of the niche (fig. 8).⁴⁹ All the figures seem static and strike hieratic poses; they do not interact and are emotionally detached from each other. The second painting, considerably damaged, depicts two angels lifting a sphere containing a cross, in the center of which Christ is shown seated on a rainbow within a mandorla (fig. 9). Both west-wall

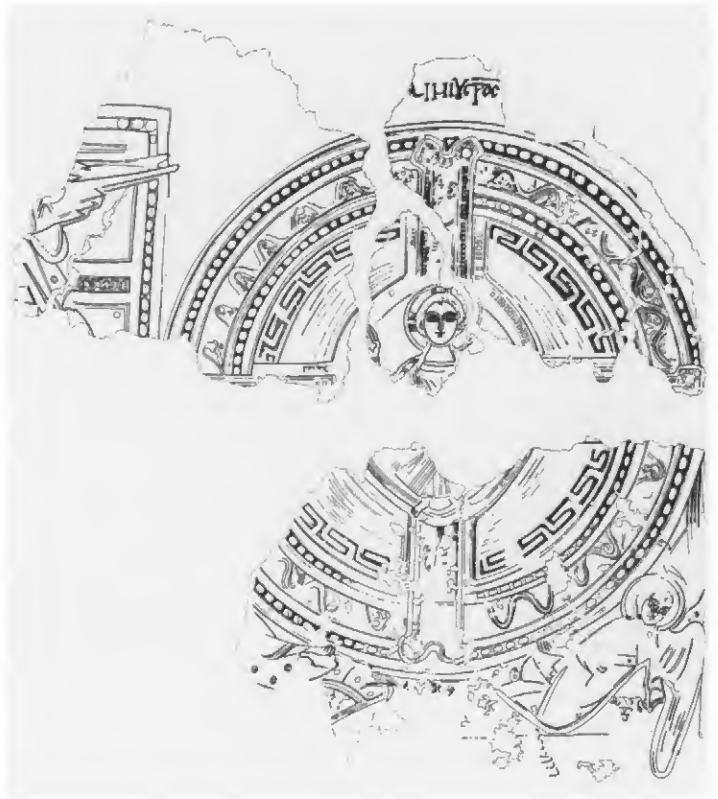


Figure 9. Christ in a Mandorla, from the Church of the Archangel Gabriel, Dayr al-Naqlūn. Egyptian, early 11th century. Fresco: Height, 180 cm

compositions are appropriate subjects for the decoration of an apse or a dome. The church in Dayr al-Naqlūn, however, was a three-aisled basilica with a wooden roof, and a traditional representation of the Ascension decorated its apse. The architecture and the decorative program of the apse emphasize the conservatism and orthodoxy of the Alexandrine Church. Thus, it appears that in Egypt the interest in new architectural forms and iconographic themes did not begin to develop until the eleventh and the twelfth century, reaching maturity only at the beginning of the thirteenth century.

1. See Przemysław M. Gartkiewicz, *Nubia 1. Dongola 2. The Cathedral in Old Dongola and Its Antecedents* (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1990), pp. 109–309.
2. See Kazimierz Michałowski, *Faras: Die Kathedrale aus dem Wüstensand* (Zürich and Cologne: Benciger Verlag, 1967), pp. 57–102; Stefan Jakobielski, *Faras III: A History of the Bishopric of Pachoras on the Basis of Coptic Inscriptions* (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1972); Włodzimierz Godlewski, "Some Remarks on the Faras Cathedral and Its Painting," *Journal of Coptic Studies* 2 (1992), pp. 99–116.
3. See Przemysław M. Gartkiewicz, "Remarks on the Cathedral at Qasr Ibrim," in *Nubian Studies. Proceedings of the Symposium for Nubian Studies, Selwyn College, Cambridge, 1978*, ed. J. Martin Plumley (Warminster, England: Aris & Phillips Ltd., 1982), pp. 87–94.
4. See Kazimierz Michałowski, *Faras: Die Kathedrale aus dem Wüstensand* (Zürich and Cologne: Benciger Verlag, 1967), pp. 103–71.
5. See Włodzimierz Godlewski, "The Paulos Cathedral in Faras (Pachoras) and the Question of Byzantine Influences," in *Byzantine East, Latin West: Art-Historical Studies in Honor of Kurt Weitzmann*, eds. Christopher Moss and Katherine Kiefer (Princeton: Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University, 1995), pp. 235–43.
6. See Kurt Weitzmann, "Some Remarks on the Sources of the Fresco Paintings of the Cathedral of Faras," in *Kunst und Geschichte Nubiens in christlicher Zeit*, ed. Erich Dinkler (Recklinghausen: Verlag Aurel Bongers, 1970), pp. 325–46, reprinted in *idem, Studies in the Art at Sinai* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), pp. 187–208, with annotations on pp. 429–430; Mario Schwartz, "Syro-palastinensischer Einfluss auf die nubische Wandmalerei und Kirchenarchitektur," *Nubica* 1/2 (1990), pp. 585–601; W. H. C. Frend, "Nubia as an Outpost of Byzantine Cultural Influence," *Byzantinoslavica* 18, no. 1 (1968), pp. 319–29.
7. See Tomas Hagg, "Titles and Honorific Epithets in Nubian Greek Texts," *Symbolae Osloenses* 65 (1990), pp. 147–77.
8. See Kazimierz Michałowski, *Faras: Wall Paintings in the Collection of the National Museum in Warsaw* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Artystyczno-Graficzne, 1974), pp. 173–76.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 169–76.
10. *Ibid.*, pp. 128–29.
11. See Sergio Donadoni, "Les Fouilles à l'église de Sonqi Tino," in *Kunst und Geschichte Nubiens in christlicher Zeit*, ed. Erich Dinkler (Recklinghausen: Verlag Aurel Bongers, 1970), pp. 209–18.
12. *Ibid.*
13. See Kazimierz Michałowski, *Faras: Die Kathedrale aus dem Wüstensand* (Zürich and Cologne: Benciger Verlag, 1967), pp. 154–57; Karel C. Innemee, "Observations on the System of Nubian Church Decoration," *Cahier de recherches de l'Institut de papyrologie et d'égyptologie de Lille* 17 (1995), pp. 284–85.
14. See Kazimierz Michałowski, *Faras: Die Kathedrale aus dem Wüstensand* (Zürich and Cologne: Benciger Verlag, 1967), pp. 143–48.
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 153–54.
16. See Stefan Jakobielski, *Faras III: A History of the Bishopric of Pachoras on the Basis of Coptic Inscriptions* (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1972), pp. 110–14.
17. See Stefan Jakobielski, "Polish Excavations at Old Dongola, 1978/9–1982," in *Nubische Studien. Tagungsakten der 5. Internationalen Konferenz der International Society for Nubian Studies Heidelberg, 22.–25. September 1982*, ed. Martin Krause (Mainz am Rhein: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 1986), p. 300, fig. 3.
18. See Włodzimierz Godlewski, "The Late Period in Nubian Art, from the Middle of the 13th to the End of the 14th Centuries," in *Der Sudan in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart*, eds. Rolf Gundlach, Manfred Kropp, and Annalis Leibundgut (Frankfurt am Main and New York: Peter Lang, 1966), pp. 38–40, fig. 1.
19. See Kazimierz Michałowski, *Faras: Die Kathedrale aus dem Wüstensand* (Zürich and Cologne: Benciger Verlag, 1967), pp. 114–15.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 117.
21. See Giovanni Vantini, "Le Roi Kirki de Nubie à Bagdad: un ou deux voyages?" in *Kunst und Geschichte Nubiens in christlicher Zeit*, ed. Erich Dinkler (Recklinghausen: Verlag Aurel Bongers, 1970), pp. 41–48.
22. See Włodzimierz Godlewski, "The Mosque Building in Old Dongola," in *New Discoveries in Nubia: Proceedings of the Colloquium on Nubian Studies, The Hague, 1979*, ed. Paul van Moorsel (Leiden: Netherlands Instituut Voor het Nabije Oosten, 1982), pp. 21–29.
23. See Włodzimierz Godlewski, "The Cruciform Church at Old Dongola (Sudan): Some Comments," in *Coptic Studies: Acts of the Third International Congress of Coptic Studies in Warsaw, 20–25 August, 1984*, ed. Włodzimierz Godlewski (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1990), pp. 127–37.
24. See Włodzimierz Godlewski, "Old Dongola: Kom A, 1995," *Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean VII* (1996), pp. 117–20.
25. See Kazimierz Michałowski, *Faras: Wall Paintings in the Collection of the National Museum in Warsaw* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Artystyczno-Graficzne, 1974), pp. 126–40; Włodzimierz Godlewski, "Some Remarks on the Faras Cathedral and Its Painting," *Journal of Coptic Studies* 2 (1992), pp. 101–2.
26. See Kazimierz Michałowski, *Faras: Die Kathedrale aus dem Wüstensand* (Zürich and Cologne: Benciger Verlag, 1967), pp. 143–47.
27. See Kazimierz Michałowski, *Faras: Wall Paintings in the Collection of the National Museum in Warsaw* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Artystyczno-Graficzne, 1974), pp. 177–83; George Galavaris, "Observations

- on the Iconography of a Faras 'Majestas' and Its Relatives," in *Nubische Studien. Tätungsakten der 5. Internationalen Konferenz der International Society for Nubian Studies Heidelberg, 22.–25. September 1982*, ed. Martin Krause (Mainz am Rhein: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 1986), pp. 237–44.
28. See Kazimierz Michałowski, *Faras: Die Kathedrale aus dem Wüstensand* (Zürich and Cologne: Benciger Verlag, 1967), pp. 134–37; Tadeusz Gołkowski, "Scènes de la Passion et de la Résurrection sur une peinture de Faras," *Études et Travaux* 3 (1969), pp. 207–29; Eva Balicka-Witakowska, "Descente de la croix sur une peinture murale de la cathédrale de Faras," *Nubica* 1/2 (1990), pp. 459–74.
 29. See Kazimierz Michałowski, *Faras: Die Kathedrale aus dem Wüstensand* (Zürich and Cologne: Benciger Verlag, 1967), fig. 11.
 30. See Jadwiga Kubińska, "Prothèse de la cathédrale de Faras: Documents et recherches," *Revue des archéologues et historiens d'art de Louvain* 9 (1976), pp. 20–23; Adam Łajtar, "Greek Inscriptions from the Monastery on Kom H in Old Dongola," in *The Spirituality of Ancient Monasticism*, ed. Marek Starowieyski (Cracow: Wydawnictwo Benedyktynów, 1995), pp. 55–61.
 31. See Kazimierz Michałowski, *Faras: Die Kathedrale aus dem Wüstensand* (Zürich and Cologne: Benciger Verlag, 1967), pp. 131–32.
 32. See Stefan Jakobielski, *Faras III: A History of the Bishopric of Pachoras on the Basis of Coptic Inscriptions* (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1972), pp. 190–95.
 33. See Włodzimierz Godlewski, *Faras VI: Les Baptistères nubiens* (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1979), pp. 67–83.
 34. See Kazimierz Michałowski, *Faras: Die Kathedrale aus dem Wüstensand* (Zürich and Cologne: Benciger Verlag, 1967), pp. 124–25, 161–62; Kazimierz Michałowski, *Faras: Wall Paintings in the Collection of the National Museum in Warsaw* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Artystyczno-Graficzne, 1974), pp. 234–40; Paul van Moorsel, "Une Théophanie nubienne," *Rivista di archeologia cristiana* 42 (1966), pp. 297–316; Tadeusz Dobrzeński, "Maïestas Crucis in the Mural Paintings of the Faras Cathedral (now in the National Museum in Warsaw): Some Iconographical Notes," *Bulletin du Musée National de Varsovie* 15, nos. 1–2 (1974), pp. 2–20; Bianca Kuhnel, "Das Kreuz mit Christus und den vier Wesen ein nubisches Motiv und sein Bildkreis," *Oriens Christianus* 76 (1992), pp. 186–226.
 35. See Kazimierz Michałowski, *Faras: Die Kathedrale aus dem Wüstensand* (Zürich and Cologne: Benciger Verlag, 1967), pp. 159–60.
 36. See George Galavaris, "Observations on the Iconography of a Faras 'Majestas' and Its Relatives," in *Nubische Studien*, ed. Martin Krause (Mainz am Rhein: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 1986), pp. 238–41.
 37. See George Galavaris, *The Illustrations of the Prefaces in Byzantine Gospels* (Vienna: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1979), figs. 75–78.
 38. See Włodzimierz Godlewski, "Some Comments on the Wall Painting of Christ from Old Dongola," in *Nubian Studies. Proceedings of the Symposium for Nubian Studies, Selwyn College, Cambridge, 1978*, ed. J. Martin Plumley (Wormünster, England: Aris & Phillips Ltd., 1982), pp. 95–99.
 39. See Kurt Weitzmann, "Some Remarks on the Sources of the Fresco Paintings of the Cathedral of Faras," in *Kunst und Geschichte Nubiens in christlicher Zeit*, ed. Erich Dinkler (Recklinghausen: Verlag Aurel Bongers, 1970), pp. 325–46, reprinted in *idem, Studies in the Art at Sinai* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), pp. 187–208, with annotations on pp. 429–30.
 40. See Peter Grossmann, *Mittelalterliche Langhauskuppelkirchen und verwandte Typen in Oberägypten: Ein Studie zum mittelalterlichen Kirchenbau in Ägypten* (Glückstadt, Germany: Verlag J. J. Augustin GMBH, 1982), pp. 54–60.
 41. *Ibid.*, pp. 7–12.
 42. *Ibid.*, pp. 60–62.
 43. See Paul van Moorsel, "Dér es-Sourian Revisited," *Nubian Letters* 17 (1992), pp. 1–13; *idem*, "A Brief Description of the Annunciation discovered in 1991 at Dér es-Sourian," *Cahiers archéologiques* 43 (1995), pp. 118–24; *idem*, "La Grande Annonciation de Dér es-Sourian," *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale* 95 (1995), pp. 517–37.
 44. See Lucy-Anne Hunt, "The Newly Discovered Wallpainting of the Annunciation at Dayr al-Surian," *Cahiers archéologiques* 43 (1995), pp. 147–52.
 45. Nicole Thierry, "L'Annonciation de Dér es-Sourian: Recherches typologiques," *Cahiers archéologiques* 43 (1995), pp. 133–40.
 46. Tania Velmans, "Quelques Traits significatifs du style dans l'Annonciation au Monastère des Syriens," *Cahiers archéologiques* 42 (1995), pp. 141–45.
 47. Paul van Moorsel, "La Grande Annonciation de Dér es-Sourian," *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale* 95 (1995), pp. 522–24.
 48. Karel Innemee, "Dér al-Sourian: The Annunciation as Part of a Cycle?" *Cahiers archéologiques* 43 (1995), pp. 129–32.
 49. See "Naqlun 1989–1992," in *Acts of the Fifth International Congress of Coptic Studies*, ed. Tito Orlandi (Rome: C.I.M., 1993), vol. 2, pp. 183ff.; "Naqlun: Excavations 1996," in *Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean*, vol. 8: *Reports 1996* (Warsaw: Centrum Archeologii Śródziemnomorskiej Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 1997), pp. 93–96.

The History of Georgian-Byzantine Relations

Georgia occupies central and western Transcaucasia (fig. 1). The development of its civilization, which was shaped by both Western and Eastern cultural influences, reflects Georgia's geographical position, at the juncture of two continents—Europe and Asia.

During the course of the second millennium B.C., Georgian tribes united to form two large groups. The myth of the Golden Fleece sought by the Argonauts, as well as archaeological evidence, indicates that, by this early date, the western Georgians, who inhabited an area along the eastern coast of the Black Sea, already had established firm ties with the Greek world. The two Georgian states expanded in the middle of the first millennium B.C.: Egrisi (Colchis, in Greek) extended along the eastern coast of the Black Sea, and Kartli (Iberia, in Greek) encompassed all of Georgia's eastern and southwestern provinces. Western Georgia, or Colchis, always maintained more active contact with the Greek world than Kartli. During the Hellenistic period, however, Greek influences penetrated to eastern Georgia as well as to neighboring Armenia. In the 60s B.C., during the war against the king of Pontus, Mithridates VI, Transcaucasia became an arena of Roman aggression. At this time, Colchis fell to the Romans; it would remain politically subjugated to the Roman Empire

until the end of the eighth century A.D. and, from the fourth century A.D., to the East Roman Empire. Armenia also was involved in the periodic wars between Rome and Parthia. Skillfully exploiting the tensions between the two empires, Iberia greatly increased its territory and military strength and only nominally maintained the status of "ally and friend of the Romans."

In the third century A.D., after the formation of the centralized and powerful Sasanian state, the situation changed significantly. The Sasanians gradually supplanted the Romans in central and eastern Transcaucasia, extending their political influence over much of Armenia, Kartli, and Albania (the ancient kingdom occupying the territory of present-day Azerbaijan, from the first to the sixth century A.D.). Of the Transcaucasian states, only western Georgia, known at the time as Lazika (formerly, Colchis), and western Armenia remained under Roman control.

Even though Georgia repeatedly contended with foreign aggressors—initially, in the form of the Parthians and later, of the Sasanian Iranians—and western Georgia continued to be subjected to Roman influences, Georgian culture persisted in developing independently, as the handsome examples of surviving local architecture, goldsmiths' work, and glass demonstrate.

It is worth noting that cultural centers of international significance were located in ancient Colchis. In the third and fourth centuries A.D., a school of philosophy and rhetoric attended by local as well as foreign students, including Greek-Byzantines, was located in the vicinity of the river of Phasis. One of the graduates of this school was the well-known philosopher Themistios, who informs us that his own father, the rhetorician Eugenios, also "received his great wisdom" at Phasis.¹



Figure 1. Map of Georgia

The introduction of Christianity to Georgia in the fourth century A.D. is an important landmark in Georgian history. Christianity had already established a foothold in Georgia in the first century A.D., and by the 330s A.D. it had become the state religion of Kartli and presumably also of western Georgia (Lazika or Egrisi). As western Georgia had fallen within the orbit of Roman political and cultural influence, the adoption of Christianity in this region is not surprising. However, eastern Georgia and Armenia were under the political control of Sasanian Iran. For these two regions, recognition of

Christianity as their state religion was a significant event, for it indicated their desire to form closer ties with the East Roman (Byzantine) Empire and to free themselves from Iranian political and cultural domination. The triumph of Christianity implies that the ruling factions of Kartli adopted a completely Western-oriented policy focused on Byzantium. This Western orientation remained a persistent and determining factor throughout the course of Georgian history.

In its struggle with Sasanian Iran, the Arabs, and finally the Turks, the Byzantine Empire attempted to preserve its political

influence and territorial integrity by forming alliances with the Christian states of Transcaucasia. However, it is impossible to touch upon all aspects of Georgian-Byzantine political relations here, as they were complex and often contradictory in nature. For example, in the eighth century, the Byzantine ruler of northern Colchis, the archon (a powerful official) of Apkhazeti (Abkhazia; Abasgia)—the northern portion of ancient Colchis, bordering on the eastern shore of the Black Sea—rebelled against the emperor Leo IV (r. 775–80), seizing all western Georgian lands and assuming the title of “King of Apkhazeti.” Thus, Byzantium lost a province that it had controlled for centuries and, with it, all of its influence in Transcaucasia. Although the Bagratid rulers of southwestern Georgia (of the T’ao-K’larjeti region), who assumed such Byzantine titles as *kouropalates* (a high-ranking dignitary), *sebastos* (an honorific epithet conferred on foreign princes), and archon, were formally considered to be vassals of the Byzantine emperor, their dependence on Byzantium was superficial and unreliable. The *kouropalatai* of Kartli pursued their own political agenda frequently to the disadvantage of Byzantium. While the *kouropalates* David III of T’ao (r. 961–1000) assisted the emperor Basil II (r. 976–1025) in suppressing a rebellion led by Bardas Skleros in 979 A.D., relations with Byzantium were marked by hostilities during the tenth century. At that time, the Byzantine Empire did everything in its power to hinder the development of a single unified Georgian state, which was gradually becoming the leading power in Transcaucasia. It is not surprising that King David IV the Restorer (r. 1089–1125), under whose rule the process of unification was completed, officially refused the title of *kouropalates*.

Contacts between Georgia and Byzantium remained relatively strained during the reign of David IV’s successors. Taking advantage of the Fall of Constantinople to the Fourth Crusade in 1204, Queen Tamar (r. 1184–1207/1213) sent her armies to the

south coast of the Black Sea, an area populated by Chan tribes. The armies seized Trebizond (modern Trabzon), Amisos (modern Samsun), and Sinope (modern Sinop), and founded the independent Trapezuntine Empire. Alexios I Komnenos (r. 1204–22), who was raised at the Georgian court, was appointed to rule the new empire. In this way, a state dependent on Georgia was created. It later became a western Georgian outpost of sorts, which, after the reestablishment of the Byzantine Empire, frequently was the center of anti-Byzantine political actions and intrigues (see fig. 2).

Despite the declining political relationship between Georgia and Byzantium, economic, and, especially cultural, connections never ceased to exist; the influence of Byzantine civilization affected all aspects of Georgian cultural life. In Byzantium itself, Georgian monasteries (for example, the Iveron Monastery on Mount Athos, the Petritzos Monastery near modern Bachkovo in Bulgaria, and monastic establishments on the Sinai peninsula) were active centers of Georgian-Byzantine cultural ties.² Furthermore, it should not be forgotten that Georgia, surrounded by Muslims, always viewed Orthodox Byzantium as an ally and a window to Europe.

The final fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks in 1453 had serious repercussions for Georgia: Its economic ties to trading centers in Byzantium and in Italy were severed, leaving it surrounded by aggressive Muslim states. King Giorgi VIII (r. 1446–66) understood the severity of the situation and responded to the call issued by the pope in Rome to organize a Crusade against the Turks. A delegation of Transcaucasian aristocrats traveled to Europe, but the European states did not respond to the pope’s summons. The Georgians returned home empty-handed, and thus began a long period of isolation during which Georgia was subjected to constant invasions.

Next, we will touch upon some aspects of the cultural ties between the two states,

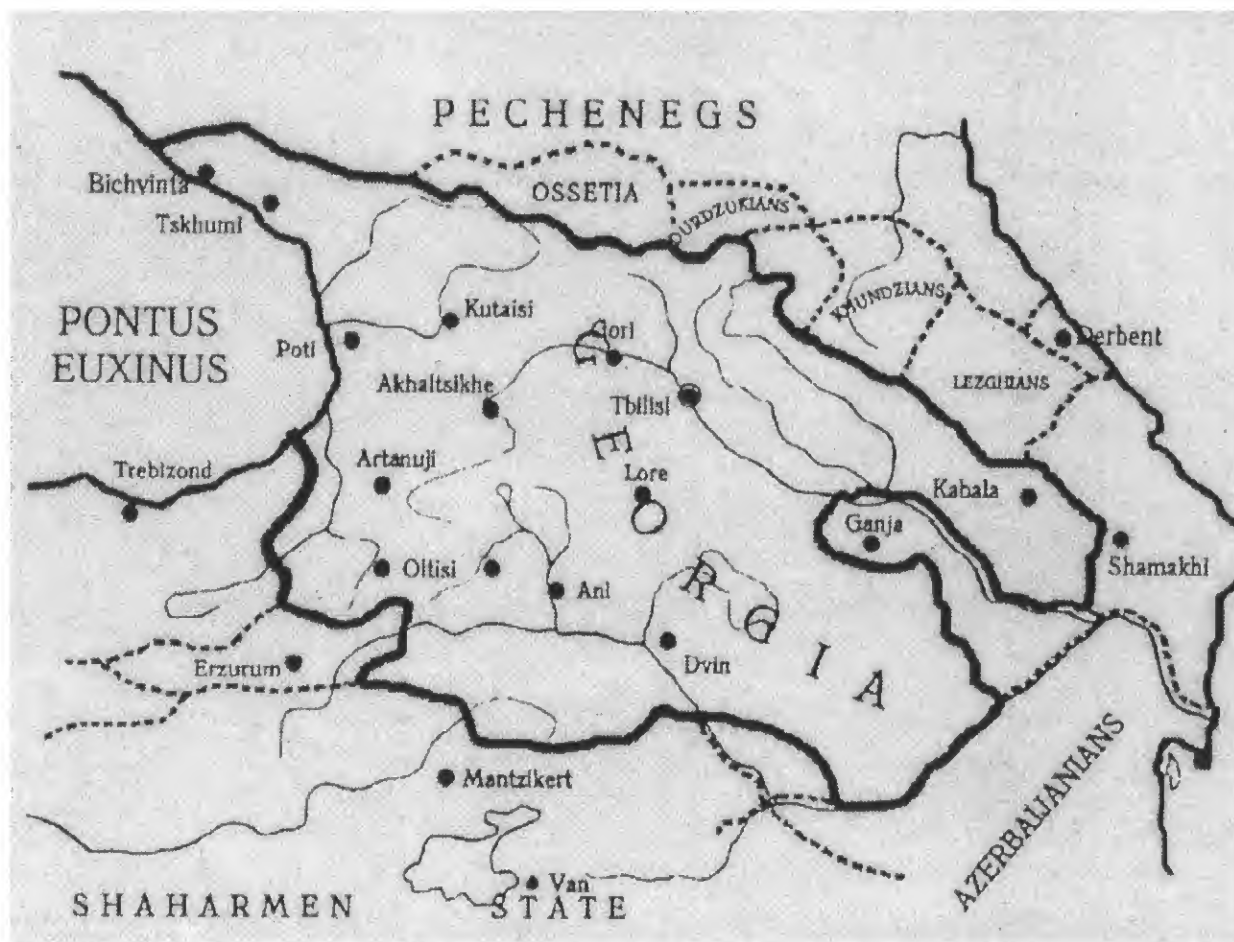


Figure 2. Map of Georgia in the early 13th century

rather than on the details of Georgian-Byzantine political relations. The close and prolonged political contacts between Byzantium and Georgia ensured the infiltration of Byzantine influence in all areas of Georgia's cultural life. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that the various Georgian tribes and, subsequently, the Georgian nation (the peoples of Colchis-Lazika and Iberia) had created their own independent culture over the course of the centuries—at least since the Bronze Age. Neither Hellenistic, nor Roman, nor

Byzantine cultural influences could supplant local cultural traditions, which always remained prominent and clearly defined. For this reason, Byzantine culture in Georgia did not find such a sympathetic response as in those Eastern lands where Hellenism had flourished.

Christianity was a central component in the adoption, development, and dissemination of Byzantine culture. Although it became the state religion of Georgia by the fourth century A.D., it still could not suppress the vitality of indigenous local traditions or

secure a primary role for Byzantine prototypes. Even in those spheres where the Christian Church required adherence to canonical strictures (for example, in the construction of churches), Georgian builders, influenced by local, centuries-old precedents, created their own architecture. A striking example of this is the original construction of Georgian basilicas whose features were without parallel in Byzantine architecture.

Basilicas appeared in Georgia only after the establishment of Christianity; thus, it was the Church itself that introduced this standard building type into Georgia. The archetypal basilica, with its longitudinal axis, clear tripartite division, and rhythmic procession of piers from the entrance to the altar, was both foreign and contrived in the context of Georgian culture. Therefore, once the basilica form was adapted to Georgian requirements, the longitudinal axis and tripartite plan were abandoned in favor of an enclosed central space surrounded by a low passageway with a narthex on the west side. While these structures formally preserved the main characteristics of the three-naved basilica, they also exhibited a clearly defined central core. This, as well as other original features, distinguishes Georgian basilicas from their Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine counterparts, and allies them with local building traditions in western Georgia—a region that was subjected to the administrative and ecclesiastical control of Byzantium until the ninth century.³

Sculpture also developed independently in Georgia. As is well known, sculpture in the round and in relief was an important part of Byzantine church architecture. Although sculpture, since Hellenistic and Roman times, had been conceived as an independent art form, in Georgia—in Antiquity and in the medieval period—it never enjoyed an independent existence. Rather, sculpture was always considered subordinate to architecture, and functioned merely as a decorative element. In type and style it significantly differed from Byzantine prototypes, and sculptors adhered to local traditions. Similar

conclusions can be formulated regarding Georgian metalwork.⁴

In addition, throughout the prolonged contact between Georgia and Byzantium, literary ties played an important role in the development of medieval Georgian literature and philosophy. In Georgia, the Bible and hagiographical works were being translated in the fifth century, and mystical-ascetic writings in the sixth. As a result, new literary genres were introduced into Georgia's national literature. Since hagiography came to Georgia by way of Byzantium, accounts of the Lives of Georgian saints reflect the influence of Byzantine models and echo many of the latter's distinctive qualities. Yet, analysis of the Georgian texts reveals that they are not verbatim copies of Byzantine prototypes but have their own specific characteristics that differentiate them from Byzantine hagiography. They provide details of the political, social, and geographical context in which a saint lived, and while similar information does, in fact, appear in Early Byzantine literature, in Georgian martyrology such descriptions are fuller, more precise, and more realistic.

Thus, Byzantine and Georgian hagiography evolved differently. The Byzantine hagiographical tradition followed a linear development. Narratives of spiritual asceticism had to conform to a standardized pattern, which tended to produce monotonous results.⁵ Georgian hagiography, on the other hand, focused instead on more realistic descriptions of the surroundings and the accomplishments of each saint.

In short, I have attempted here to present the dependence of Georgian culture upon that of Byzantium, while pointing out the uniqueness of Georgian monuments. Contrary to popular belief, Georgian culture evolved from ancient local traditions and not from the influences of other peoples, such as the Armenians or Syrians. Thus, in evaluating the role and extent of Byzantine influence, it is imperative first to recognize the significance of the special qualities that distinguish Georgian literary and artistic works from

their classical Byzantine counterparts. This originality of expression underscores the character of a nation—one with a highly developed culture that, nevertheless, was receptive to a variety of creative influences.

1. See Themistios, *Oration 27* (333), in *The Private Orations of Themistius*, trans. Robert J. Penella (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 2000), p. 165.
2. See Levan Menabde, *Dzveli kartuli mts'erlobis k'erebi*, vol. 1 (Tbilisi: Tbilisis universit'et'is gamomtsemloba, 1962); Nodar Lomouri, *K istorii gruzinskogo petritsonskogo monastyria* (Tbilisi: Metsniereba, 1981); Elene Met'reveli, *Nark'vevebi Atonis k'ult'urul—saganmanatleblo k'eris ist'oriidan* (Tbilisi: Nek'ari, 1996).

3. See Georgii Chubinashvili, *Arkhitektura Kakhetii* (Tbilisi: 1956–59); Vakhtang V. Beridze, *Dzveli kartuli khuyotmodzghvreba/Drevnegruzinskaia arkhitektura* (Tbilisi: Khelovneba, 1974); Russudan Mepisaschwili and Wachtang Zinzaze, *Die Kunst des alten Georgien* (Zürich: Atlantis Verlag, 1977); Nodar Sh. Dzhanberidze and Iraklii Tsitsishvili, *Architectural Monuments of Georgia* (Moscow: 1996).
4. See Russudan Mepisaschwili and Wachtang Zinzaze, *Die Kunst des alten Georgien* (Zürich: Atlantis Verlag, 1977).
5. See Revaz Baramidze, *Muchenichestvo sv. Shushanik, drevneishii pamiatnik gruzinskoi literatury* (Tbilisi: Metsniereba, 1978); Elguja Khintibidze, *Gruzinsko-vizantiiskie literaturnye vzaimootnosheniia* (Tbilisi: Izdatelstvo Tbilisskogo universiteta, 1989).

Georgia and the Byzantine World: Artistic Aspects

This paper does not attempt to address every aspect of Georgian art, but, instead, to examine its general characteristics and select monuments, with the intention of providing a better understanding of the Christian art of a particular culture. Only extant works that influenced the formation and development of Georgian art and that defined its position within the wider scope of Christian art will be considered.

Georgia, situated south of the Caucasus Mountains, between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea, on the border of Europe and Asia, lies at the crossroads of major commercial routes that link the most important centers of the Mediterranean world with the Near East. Even during the earliest period in Georgian history, the country's geographical position facilitated cultural contacts with many ancient civilizations (Sumerian, Hittite, Achaemenid, Sasanian, Greek, Roman) and contributed significantly to its historical and cultural development as well. For this reason, the study of medieval Georgian culture must be mindful of the relationship between Georgia and other ancient civilizations, the Orient, and Byzantium. This interaction between Georgia and its neighbors has been variously interpreted, reflecting methodologies and approaches current at different times,¹ yet each of these attempts has eschewed a thorough analysis of the issue.

The precise nature of the relationship between Georgia and Byzantium remains a central consideration in the study of Georgian art. It is noteworthy that the first Europeans who encountered Georgian monuments, such as the Swiss scholar Frédéric Dubois de Montpéroux in the 1830s, assumed them to be products of Byzantine Orthodox culture, thereby engendering enduring misconceptions regarding these structures.² Although incorrect, such opinions were of great significance because they drew attention to Georgian monuments and evaluated them in the broader context of Christian civilization. Subsequent studies and further in-depth research into different aspects of Georgian medieval art have helped to identify its unique characteristics.

The adoption of Christianity was an important milestone for Georgia. It quickly resulted in changes in the Georgian conception of the world and way of life. By the 330s, Kartli (Iberia or eastern Georgia) embraced Christianity as its state religion, becoming one of the first states to do so. This event determined the political and cultural orientation of Georgia and defined its relationship with Byzantium as well as with other Christian countries.

Byzantine influences were expressed differently in the various types of Georgian art. I shall consider a group of Georgian monuments in which the character and the specificity of these influences are easily recognizable. My discussion will begin with architecture, as it most distinctly exhibits Georgian features. (The scholar Giorgi Chubinashvili and others from the Institute of Georgian Art have thoroughly studied the development of Georgian medieval architecture and have determined the main stages of its evolution.)³ Focusing on a few of the several thousand churches built in medieval

Georgia, I shall discuss the particular elements that characterize them as Georgian.

In the centuries after the acceptance of Christianity, two basic church types were current in Georgia: the basilica and the domed-cross plan. One of the foremost basilicas, the Sioni (Zion) Church at Bolnisi (figs. 1, 2), occupies an important place in the history of Georgian architecture. Inscriptions containing the names of historical persons date the Sioni Church between 478 and 493.⁴ It is a three-aisled structure with a projecting semicircular apse, an arcaded gallery along the north side, and a small entrance gallery and baptistery on the south side. Five pairs of cruciform pillars define the nave and aisles of the basilica. In his monograph on the Sioni Church, Chubinashvili distinguished the following features of the monument: a prominent central apse, a separate room on the south side of the church, a baptistery with two side apses, a gallery along the north side of the church, lateral entrances on the sides of the church, horseshoe-shaped arches (typical of fifth- and sixth-century structures), and a pitched roof over the nave and aisles. He also noted that the church lacked a *diakonikon* (sacristy).⁵

The celebrated Church of Jvari (the Cross), overlooking Mtskheta (the capital of Georgia from the fourth century B.C. to the fifth century A.D., and an important religious center), which was built between 586 and 604, is a genuine example of a classical domed-cross structure. The remarkably high level of artistry and the pivotal role of this monument in the evolution of Georgian medieval architecture underscore its importance. The design and form of the Church of Jvari reflect the experimentation with architectural styles that appears to have begun during the fifth century, when Georgian architecture apparently underwent several stages of artistic and structural transformation.⁶



Figure 1. Sioni Church, Bolnisi, Georgia.
Exterior view of the apse. 478–93

Figure 2. Sioni Church, Bolnisi, Georgia. A stone capital from the arcade in the apse. 478–93



The Church of Jvari has four conches with four rooms, one at each corner of the building. Four exedrae, placed on the diagonal, connect the four rooms to the central naos. The interior spaces are clearly articulated on the exterior of the building. The dome of the church rests on four squinches that are positioned over the exedrae and form the transition from square to circle. Squinches are a characteristic feature of Georgian Early Christian architecture; in Byzantine architecture of this period only pendentives were used.

The Church of Jvari is the earliest of a group of seventh-century Georgian examples of the same architectural type; the others are in Ateni, Dzveli-Shuamta, and Martvili. Beyond the Georgian border, in Armenia, architecturally similar churches were constructed in the late sixth and early seventh century. However, in spite of analogies in plan, the Armenian Church at Avan, the Church of Saint Hrip'simē at Ejmiacin, and the Church at Adiaman clearly differ from Georgian monuments in several aspects.⁷

Georgian churches of the subsequent period also differ noticeably from their Byzantine contemporaries. The great cathedrals in Oshki (tenth century), Svetitskhoveli (1010–29), and Alaverdi (first quarter of the eleventh century), and the Royal Cathedral of King Bagrat' III at Kutaisi (late tenth–early eleventh century), among many others, display originality in their overall stylistic conception as well as in their details.⁸

In addition to its architectural features, the Church of Jvari is noteworthy for its carvings. Carved portraits of the church donors appear on the east façade. Those depicted include the *erismtavari* (lord of Kartli): St'e'panoz I, *patrikios* (high-ranking dignitary) (fig. 3), and the *hypatoi* (consuls) Demet're and Adrnerse, members of St'e'panoz I's family.

A discussion of lay portraiture on religious monuments should begin with an examination of a group of Early Christian carved stone crosses that, despite their wide



Figure 3. Church of Jvari (the Cross), Mtskheta, Georgia. 586–604. Detail of the east façade, with the carved limestone portrait of the *erismtavari* (lord) St'e'panoz I

diffusion in Georgia, remain largely unknown to non-Georgian specialists because information regarding them appears only in Georgian publications (fig. 4). These sixth- and seventh-century sculpted crosses on stone pillars are significant for the study of the style and iconography of Georgian as well as Early Christian and Medieval plastic arts. Working within the framework of the broader Christian heritage and relying on well-established local traditions, Georgian sculptors resolved complex artistic and theological problems in the carved decoration of the sculpted crosses. While, during the Middle Ages, such carved crosses were widespread in Georgia and Armenia, they differed in style and artistic features, reflecting the social and



Figure 4. The Adoration of the Cross. Carving on the pillar of a stone cross from Dmanisi, Georgia. 6th century. Limestone: 28 x 18 x 16 cm. The Georgian State Art Museum, Tbilisi



Figure 5. Daniel in the Lions' Den. Detail of a relief on the pillar of a stone cross from Usaneti, Georgia. 8th–9th century. Limestone: 100 x 26 x 26 cm. The Georgian State Art Museum, Tbilisi

religious climate in each of these two neighboring countries.

On the stone pillars supporting the crosses ecclesiastical themes were subjected to original interpretation, producing schematic imagery whose meaning was evident to the patrons who commissioned the crosses and to the members of their ecclesiastical community. The ornament and imagery on the flat surfaces of the crosses and their supporting pillars were characterized by frontality, linearity, and rhythmic precision. This ornamental style, distinct from the “refined geometry” of Byzantine plastic arts, was borrowed from popular artistic traditions to express Christian spiritual ideals. Its origin can be traced to the Eastern influences in Late Antique art.

The following points demonstrate that the inspiration for medieval Georgian art originated in the association and fusion of recognized Christian and local elements:

1. The selection of subjects represented on the pillars of crosses is related to the themes depicted in Early Christian art, especially in catacomb paintings and sarcophagi reliefs. The reliefs on the pillars also embody the “symbolic parallelism” of Byzantine art. They employ Old Testament animal imagery to portray symbolically the correlation between Evangelical subjects and salvation. The scenes of Daniel in the Lions' Den and the Sacrifice of Isaac, on the eighth- or ninth-century Usaneti cross (fig. 5), illustrate that biblical subjects also were employed to



Figure 6. The Miracles of Christ. Carving on the pillar of a stone cross from Brdadzori, Georgia. 6th century. Limestone: 190 x 27 x 29 cm. The Georgian State Art Museum, Tbilisi

present the broader, universal significance of Christian history and learning.⁹ The scene of the Sacrifice of Isaac also appears on the eighth-century Mamula cross.¹⁰

2. The master carvers of the Georgian crosses used the four faces of the stone pillars as surfaces for the portrayal of biblical subjects. The scene of Christ's Ascension, which extends across two sides of the pillar of the sixth-century Khandisi cross, recalls the distribution of imagery on the two panels of a diptych. Christ Enthroned is shown on the front of the pillar and an angel is carved on one of the sides.¹¹ On the sixth-century cross from the village of Didi Gomareti, the same subject unfolds over three surfaces of the pillar; Christ is depicted on the front and an angel occupies each of the sides. The Ascension also is represented across the three faces of the pillar of the Nagvarevi cross.¹² The disposition of imagery on the last two monuments may be viewed as the architectonic parallel of the decoration of a triptych.

3. The inclusion of the Virgin in the iconography of the Ascension on some of the crosses brings to mind apsidal compositions in the churches of Christian Egypt (at Saqqara and Bawit). The imagery on the Khandisi cross unites the portrayal of the enthroned Theotokos and Child with the Ascension scene above, on the front of the stone pillar. Furthermore, elements of the setting in which the holy figures are positioned are reminiscent of comparable details on sixth- and seventh-century Coptic icons.¹³

4. In their subject, format, and religious function, the carved icons on Georgian stone crosses are comparable to the stone icons inserted in the walls of churches in northern Mesopotamia dating from the sixth through the seventh century.¹⁴

5. The Miracles of Christ appears on one of the faces of the sixth-century Brdadzori cross (fig. 6).¹⁵ The selection of the scenes and their vertical distribution evoke the vertical segments of the frames of Byzantine five-part ivory diptychs.¹⁶ The division of Evangelical episodes into two cycles, one

composed of miracle scenes and the other of Passion scenes, is related to the decoration of Palestinian martyria. Beginning in the fifth century, the miracles of Christ, interpreted as theophanies, were featured as an independent cycle in the decoration of martyria.¹⁷ Although the decorative programs on the pillars of Georgian crosses were based on such established schemes, Georgian sculptors provided their own creative interpretations.

6. Donor portraits of the feudal lords who commissioned the stone crosses appear among the subjects decorating the pillars. For example, on the sixth-century pillar of the Brdadzori cross, a Georgian lord stands next to the enthroned Theotokos (fig. 7). The portrayal of lay persons on the pillars of crosses is associated with the rise of feudal power in Georgia. A similar artistic development took place concurrently in Byzantium, in the Justinianian era, when portraiture was widespread. Monumental Byzantine compositions showing saints presenting donors to Christ, or to the Theotokos, date to this period, as, for example, in the fifth- and sixth-century mosaics of the Church of Hosios Demetrios in Thessalonike;¹⁸ the sixth-century mosaics of the Basilica Eufraiana in Poreč (Parenzo), Croatia;¹⁹ and the sixth-century painting in the Catacomb of Commodilla in Rome.²⁰ These works indicate that the same social processes stimulated the development of lay portraiture in Georgia as in Byzantium. The votive and commemorative character of Georgian stone crosses made them popular vehicles for the presentation of lay portraits.

It is clear from the above discussion that Georgia occupied a unique cultural and political position in the Byzantine world. Surviving monuments allow us to define the distinctive character of its art, but in order to understand the place of art within the broader context of the medieval world we must consider, however briefly, the medium of metalwork. Precious gold and silver objects represent the finest examples of Georgian art, and more than twenty-five hundred such items from the medieval



Figure 7. The Theotokos with a Donor. Detail of a carving on the pillar of a stone cross from Brdadzori, Georgia. 6th century. Limestone: 190 x 27 x 29 cm. The Georgian State Art Museum, Tbilisi

period form the collection of the Treasure Chamber of The Georgian State Art Museum. The oldest medieval metalwork dates to the eighth and ninth centuries and includes crosses, icons, bookbindings, and other liturgical objects.

With the acceptance of Christianity, Georgian artists were confronted with a new artistic problem: Christian imagery based on Graeco-Roman or Eastern Christian models had to be adapted to a Georgian context. The first examples of Georgian Christian art displayed a strong local, purely ornamental quality. Furthermore, in the early stages of Christianization, Georgian masters employed only traditional artistic devices in the production of works of art displaying Christian



Figure 8. Icon of the Transfiguration, from the Zarzma Monastery, Georgia. 886. Silver gilt and silver repoussé: 131.5 x 74 cm. The Georgian State Art Museum, Tbilisi

subjects. One of the oldest Georgian embossed monuments from this period is the large gilded-silver Icon of the Transfiguration from the Zarzma Monastery (fig. 8)—dated, in a historical inscription, to 886.²¹ However, according to Giorgi Chubinashvili, the painted icon is earlier in date; only the silver revetment, which was added later, dates to 886.²²

The decorative and flat treatment of the surface of the Zarzma icon creates a sense of monumentality. The strong outlines of certain parts of the otherwise two-dimensional composition endow the icon with an expressive quality. Similarities in style between the Zarzma icon and certain stone reliefs indicate that this linearity and expressivity conform to the general charac-

teristics of Georgian sculpture of the High Middle Ages. One such stylistically analogous relief from the first quarter of the ninth century bears the image of the Georgian lord Ashof' I the Great, *kouropalates* (high-ranking dignitary) (r. 786–826/30);²³ it exhibits the linear rhythm, flatness of composition, and distinctive ornamental character of Georgian sculpture from the High Middle Ages. The eighth- or ninth-century Usaneti cross, with its original, graphic composition, is another example of this style.

When discussing ancient Georgian repoussé works, the enameled Martvili triptych, with its central image of the Deesis, also must be mentioned (fig. 9).²⁴ Nikodim P. Kondakov first dated the triptych more than eighty years ago,²⁵ assigning it to the eighth or the ninth century; it contains one of the oldest representations of the Deesis and, more importantly, is one of the earliest surviving works in enamel. The palette of the enamels in the Deesis is impressive, with strong colors used for both details and large background areas. Very thin gold cloisons, which define shapes, resemble gold graffiti set against an emerald, blue, and purple ground. The external surface of the triptych displays niello images of the Nativity, the Hypapante, the Anastasis, and the Holy Women at the Sepulcher. A linear rhythm and an expressive graphic style mark these scenes. This same artistic style characterizes the ninth- or tenth-century enkolpion with the Crucifixion, from the Martvili Monastery (fig. 10).²⁶ The silhouetted figure of Christ, set off against the black ground, seems to emerge from the surface in spite of the two-dimensionality of the work. The Theotokos and John, who flank the crucified Christ, are represented on a much smaller scale, but all the figures are rendered as linear, schematic silhouettes.

The eighth- and ninth-century cloisonné enamels from Georgia number among the earliest extant works in enamel. In fact, those mentioned above and three other enamels on the Khakhuli Triptych—depicting Saint Theodore and the Theotokos—as well



Figure 9. Martvili triptych, with the Deesis on the center panel, from Martvili, Georgia. 8th–9th century. Silver gilt, with precious stones, cloisonné enamel, and niello: (center panel) 12.2 x 12.2 cm. The Georgian State Art Museum, Tbilisi

as a quatrefoil with the Crucifixion, are the oldest existing images in enamel. Many medieval Georgian monasteries produced enamel work. Goldsmiths' workshops existed in such centers as Tbilisi, Gelati, Martvili, and Mghvimevi. Moreover, monasteries in the south, such as those of Zarzma and Sapara, and the monastic centers in T'ao-K'larjeti, a part of historical Georgia now in Turkey, among others, were well known for their production of metalwork.

Inscriptions on many Georgian works of art record the names of donors and of artists of various periods, including Assat from K'larjeti (10th century), Gabriel from Svaneti (10th century), Gabriel Sapereli,²⁷ Assan, Theodore and George Gvasavaidsze from Svaneti (10th–11th century), Ivane Monisdze from Martvili (10th–11th century),

and Ioanne the Deacon from Martvili (10th–11th century). Two eminent twelfth-century Georgian silversmiths are also known: the artists Beka and Beshken Op'izari, who produced some of the superb extant works in silver.²⁸

In conclusion, it can be said that Byzantium exercised a strong influence on the art of several nations, especially such Orthodox countries as Georgia, which appropriated the ancient Hellenistic heritage from Byzantium. Contact with Byzantium facilitated the transmission of its spiritual values to Georgia, which, in turn, stimulated new developments in native artistic traditions. In countries with a rich and highly developed artistic patrimony, Byzantine art was creatively modified and transformed into an exceedingly original, indigenous Christian art. Georgian



Figure 10. The Crucifixion, on the enkolpion from Martvili, Georgia. 8th–9th century. Silver, silver gilt, and niello: 11.8 x 9 cm. The Georgian State Art Museum, Tbilisi

medieval monuments attest to this creative process, but those of the High Middle Ages, in particular, remain to be fully assessed. They are innovative manifestations of the theology expressed in the *Celestial Hierarchy* of Pseudo-Dionysios the Areopagite, as well as of Byzantine aesthetic concepts.

1. See Giorgi N. Chubinashvili, *Kartuli khelovnebis istoria*, vol. 1 (Tbilisi: Sakhelgami, 1936); *idem*, *Gruzinskoe chekannoe iskusstvo* (Tbilisi: Sabch'ota Sakartvelo, 1959); *idem*, *Arkhitektura Kakhetii* (Tbilisi: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk Gruzinskoi SSR, 1959); *idem*, *Voprosi istorii iskusstva* (Tbilisi: Khelovneba, 1970).
2. See Frédéric Dubois de Montpéroux, *Voyage autour du Caucase, chez les Tcherkesse et les Abkhases, en Colchide*,

- en Géorgie, en Arménie et en Crimée*, vol. 1 (Paris: 1839), pp. 230–31, 404–6.
3. See Georgii N. Chubinashvili, *Bolnisskii Sion*, vol. 9, *Bulletin de l'Institut Marr de langues, d'histoire et de culture matérielle* (Tbilisi: L'Académie des Sciences, 1940).
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 68–70.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 126–27, 130, 149–50.
6. See Georgii N. Chubinashvili, *Pamiatniki tipa Dzhvari* (Tbilisi: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk Gruzinskoi SSR, 1948).
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 104–14.
8. See Vachtang Beridze, *Dzveli kartuli khurotmodzgvreba* (Tbilisi: Khelovneba, 1974), pp. 49–59, plates 75–96; Adriano Alpago Novello, "Religious Architecture," in *Art and Architecture of Medieval Georgia* (Louvain-la-Neuve: Éditions de l'institut supérieur d'archéologie et d'histoire de l'art de l'Université catholique de Louvain, 1980), pp. 243–51, ill. 310–19, 395, 399, 432–38.
9. See Kitty Machabeli [Matchabeli], "Dzveli kartuli p'lastikis sazkisebtan," *Khelovneba* 10 (1984), pp. 65–71.
10. See Kitty Matchabeli, "Une sculpture géorgienne paléochrétienne. La stèle du village de Mamula," *Revue des études géorgiennes et caucasiennes* 3 (1987), pp. 133–47.
11. See Nikolai G. Chubinashvili, *Khandisi* (Tbilisi: Metsniereba, 1972), pl. 7.
12. See Kitty Machabeli [Matchabeli], "St'elis fragment'i sopel Nagvarevidan," *Matsne* 2 (1988), pp. 117–33, ill. 1–3.
13. See Kitty Matchabeli, "Certains schémas iconographiques de la sculpture paléochrétienne de Géorgie," in *IV Symposium international sur l'art Géorgien* (Tbilisi: 1983), pp. 9–10.
14. See Marial Mundell, "Monophysite Church Decoration," in *Iconoclasm: Papers given at the ninth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, University of Birmingham, March 1975*, eds. Anthony Bryer and Judith Herrin (Birmingham, England: Centre for Byzantine Studies, University of Birmingham, 1977), pp. 59–74.
15. See Kitty Machabeli [Matchabeli], "Kristianuli temebi dzvel kartul p'lastikashi," *Khelovneba* 2 (1993), pp. 43–60.
16. See Wolfgang Fritz Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten der Spätantike und des frühen Mittelalters* (Berlin: 1929), nos. 112, 113, 119, 142, 145.
17. See André Grabar, *Martyrium: Recherches sur le culte des reliques et l'art chrétien antique*, vol. 2 (1946; reprinted, London: Variorum, 1972), pp. 247–54 ff.
18. See *Age of Spirituality: Late Antique and Early Christian Art, Third to Seventh Century*, ed. Kurt Weitzmann (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1979), pp. 554–55.
19. See Milan Prelog, *Mozaika Poreča* (Belgrade: Jugoslavia, 1959), pp. 4, 10, 11.

20. See Nikodim P. Kondakov, *Ikonografiia Bogomateri*, vol. 1 (Saint Petersburg: Tipografiia Imperatorskoi Akademii Nauk, 1914), pp. 356–60.
21. See Georgii N. Chubinashvili, *Gruzinskoe chekannoe iskusstvo* (Tbilisi: Sabch'ota Sakartvelo, 1959), pp. 27–42, ills. 1–4.
22. Ibid., p. 38.
23. See Natela A. Aladashvili, *Monumental'naia skul'ptura Gruzii* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1977), pp. 66–67.
24. See Georgii N. Chubinashvili, *Gruzinskoe chekannoe iskusstvo* (Tbilisi: Sabch'ota Sakartvelo, 1959), pp. 49–51, ill. 26.
25. See Nikodim P. Kondakov, *Istoriia i pamiatniki vizantiiskoi emali* (Saint Petersburg: Tipografiia Imperatorskoi Akademii Nauk, 1982), pp. 119–20; Klaus Wessel, “Email,” in *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst*, vol. 2, eds. Marcell Restle and Klaus Wessel (Stuttgart: A. Hiersemann, 1971), cols. 104–9; Leila Z. Khuskivadze, *Medieval Cloisonné Enamels at the Georgian State Museum of Fine Arts* (Tbilisi: Khelovneba, 1984), pp. 21–22, ills. 1–4.
26. See Georg Tschubinaschvili [Giorgi N. Chubinashvili], “Ein Goldschmiedtriptychon des VIII–IX Jahrhunderts aus Martvili,” *Zeitschrift für Bildende Kunst* 64, no. 5/6 (1930), pp. 81–87; *idem*, *Gruzinskoe chekannoe iskusstvo* (Tbilisi: Sabch'ota Sakartvelo, 1959), pp. 82–88.
27. An inscription on the handle identifies Gabriel Sapereli as the artist of the processional cross from Brei (Kartli) included in “The Glory of Byzantium” exhibition. See Helen C. Evans, “Processional Cross,” in *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, eds. Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), no. 232, pp. 344–45.
28. See Shalva Amiranashvili, *Beka Op'izari* (Tbilisi: Khelovneba, 1956).

ISBN 0-300-08929-5



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